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A
L E T T E R
TO THE
DILETTANTI SOCIETY,

R E S P E C T I N G

The Obtention of certain Matters essentially necessary for
the Improvement of PUBLIC TASTE, and for accom-
plishing the original Views of the ROYAL ACADEMY
OF GREAT-BRITAIN.

B Y

JAMES BARRY, Esq. R. A.

PROFESSOR OF PAINTING TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE SECOND EDITION.

WITH AN-

A P P E N D I X,

Respecting the Matters lately agitated between the
ACADEMY and the PROFESSOR OF PAINTING.

L O N D O N:

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P R I C E F I V E S H I L L I N G S.



A
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TO THE
DILETTANTI SOCIETY,

*Respecting the Obtention of certain Matters essentially necessary
for the Improvement of public Taste, and for accomplishing
the original Views of the ROYAL ACADEMY OF GREAT
BRITAIN.*

BY JAMES BARRY, Esq. R. A.

PROFESSOR OF PAINTING TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

THOSE who go no farther than mere Dilletanti-
ship may well laugh at all the fuss about this new
nostrum, this Venetian secret of Painting. Such
a concurrence of ridiculous circumstances, so
many, such gross absurdities, and such busy in-
dustrious folly, in contriving for the publicity and
exposure of a quacking, disgraceful imposture, is,
I believe, unparalleled in the history of the art.
I should laugh too, were I not withheld by con-
siderations for the reputation of the country, of the
English School of Art, for the character of the
Royal Academy, and for the fate of its poor pupils,

now sent adrift to search out for themselves that true Venetian Art of Painting, which must not be taught them, as the President and so many of the Academicians are each of them bound (most sovereignly ridiculous) under a forfeiture of £.200 to keep it secret. Mr. Malone too, the editor of this posthumous and complete edition of Sir Joshua Reynolds's writings: by what ridiculous or unlucky fatality has this publication been reserved for the very week of the opening of the Exhibition, in order to serve as an opportune and most eclatic advertisement to usher this contemptible imposture to the public notice? It is to be regretted, that the procrastination, which so long withheld these papers of Sir Joshua from the public, had not been discretely extended a little further to the opening of the Exhibition, as what Mr. Malone then witnessed, even on the first day's exposure of this nostrum at the Exhibition dinner, would have saved him the—I will not give it a name, but it would have saved him from being so far overreached as to insert the supposititious history of this contemptible quackery into his Life of Sir Joshua, with the additional egregious nonsense of a lamentation for its unfortunately having escaped his numerous researches. Mr. Malone ought to have been aware, that colouring was the forte of his friend; that the Infant Hercules, the Tragic Muse, the Dido, the Iphigenia, and many others

of

of his pictures, afford convincing and glorious testimony that Sir Joshua well knew how to employ as much of the Venetian manner of colouring as suited his own views of the art, founded as they wisely were upon the public expectations, now near the close of the eighteenth century, which would naturally expect and demand that excellent mode of practice in colouring should now be united with the other admirable qualities and perfections of art, in which the painters of the old Venetian school were but little and poorly practised.

It would have been of much more utility to art, and to the credit, future peace, and efficiency of the Academy, had Mr. Malone inserted the notes Sir Joshua made of those disputes which occasioned his resignation of the Presidency, and which, after his return to it, still continued, so as to incline him to resign a second time, complaining that he felt himself restrained by a low politic *combination* in the Academy, which would not suffer the institution to be made of that importance and advantage to the public, which was so easy to effect with a little elevation of mind. If he had made this second resignation, as he was so inclined, and thought himself obliged to do, the whole matter of difference had been published by himself; and as he neither wanted the penetration to investigate, nor the temper to manage it, probably it

would not have been the least useful of his literary productions, and would now contribute not a little to weed out that accursed evil which had given him so much trouble, and which remains still in the Academy in greater vigour than before. I feel the more concern in this matter, as it was at my entreaty this second resignation did not take place, on the night of the Council for settling the invitations to the last Exhibition-dinner before his death : it is wonderful that Mr. Malone, notwithstanding his knowledge of these differences, and the difficulty that he, and the other executors of Sir Joshua, had to prevail with this Cabal, even to suffer his coffin to be laid out in the Academy on the day of his funeral :* it is, one cannot help observing, most strange and unaccountable, that after all this Mr. Malone should not only have made so little mention of these differences, but that he should suffer himself to be so far misled by the cunning and plausibilities of some of the members of this very Cabal, as thus to bemire his

Life

* The odious difference respecting the funeral of Sir Joshua was, on the part of the Academy, managed entirely by the Cabal who governed in the Council; and the letters that passed on that occasion between Sir Joshua's Executors and the Council have perhaps been suppressed, as I could not obtain a sight of any thing relating to this matter, when I called for it at the General Meeting of the Academy, eager as I was to see, and that the Academy should see, a stinging letter which Mr. Metcalf, one of those Executors, told me he sent on that occasion.

Life of Sir Joshua, by making it serve as the advertisement to trumpet the importance of this pretended discovery, in the search of which his friend had been, as he says, all his life, labouring without effect. But it is of no avail, mere loss of time, and unwisely, unprofitably cultivating vexation, thus to trouble ourselves about what is done and passed. Better to look forward, and endeavour to obtain some preventive, that any such similar disgraceful illusion should not any more be obtruded upon the pupils of the Academy and the public; and then, after all, it will have happened well, if our recent shame, and the disgrace which must follow this pretended Venetian business in the eyes of strangers, should at last rouse and stimulate us to take some little pains in obtaining a remedy so desirable and so necessary.

No intelligent artist who has seen and studied Titian's most Giorgionesque picture of St. Mark, in the sacristy of the church of the Salute at Venice, his Christ crowned with Thorns, in the sacristy at Milan (but now at Paris), and many other of his genuine, untouched, unadulterated works, can for a moment doubt or hesitate to subscribe to all that has been said respecting his suogo, sapidity, his flow of well-nourished, rich, harmonious colour: the landscape back-ground also of his St. Peter Martyr, and many of his other pictures, are fully adequate to our highest expectations from

his reputation of the greatest of all landscape-painters ; and it is impossible there should be any difference of opinion or hesitation about these matters at Venice. But here in London, one feels so much embarrassed to point out any thing illustrative and worthy the reputation of this great colourist, either in the way of figures or landscape, that for the most part and generally those Titianesque qualities are better sought for in the long and uninterrupted chain of the great successors of the Venetians, in Rubens, Joardans, Rembrandt, and Vandyk ; it is often found, and in a high degree, in Reynolds and Greuze, and always in the finished pictures of Wilson, whose landscapes afford the happiest illustration of whatever there is of fascinating, rich, precious, and harmonious, in the Venetian colouring, both as to hue and arrangement. Claude, who was near a century later than Titian, as far as he goes, and he goes all the length in colouring, leaving his timidity and neatness out of the question, his hues and arrangements are perfectly Venetian ; and leaving out also the superior dignity and vigour that always accompany whatever Wilson has done, yet, in the mere value and arrangement of tints, his works have incontrovertibly more of Claude, than, I was going to say, any thing we have to shew of Claude himself.

After a lapse of now near three hundred years, there will be no end to litigation and criticism
respecting

respecting the originality of pictures. Let us but reflect upon the acknowledged inequalities and different degrees of felicity and success that unavoidably must ever be found in the works of all artists, even the greatest, and the different degrees of merit in the multitude of succeeding artists who imitated and copied them; reflect also on the calamitous intervention of the race of picture-cleaners, on what they necessarily take away in cleaning and lifting off the coats of varnish, that may have been occasionally and indiscreetly put on in such a long tract of time, according to the whims of the several possessors; and also, what these cleaners afterwards add in the way of refreshing, restoring, and re-painting; and that, by an unavoidable unlucky fatality, it has happened that the pictures of those very artists who more peculiarly devoted themselves to the colouring part, have (as greater objects of temptation for meddlers, though more liable to be injured) more than any others fallen under the contamination of those miscreant picture-cleaners, or rather defacers, who, like a pestilential blast, sweep away every vestige of the pristine health and vigour of well-nourished tints; leaving nothing to remain but a hoary meagreness and decrepitude: all these considerations, taken together, must surely make it more eligible (in speaking of old pictures) to confine our affirmation rather to what is worthy of an ancient painter, than to what is really the work of his

hand. As to that business of picture-cleaning, although it may a little interrupt the matter in hand, yet, as it may be of use to push our remarks on this picture-defacing a little farther, I shall, as every opportunity should be laid hold of that may help to interrupt the growth and continuance of such an evil, here insert the following passage from my Lecture on Colouring, read in the Academy.

But the picture of the Cornaro family, at Northumberland-house, has unfortunately some years since been so re-painted, that Titian and his admirers must disown it ; and something similar is reported of Vandyk's famous picture of the Pembroke family, at Wilton. Surely there are some right, well-grounded claims on a celebrated work, as well as those of the proprietor : the mere purchase or possession does not give a title to the liberty of destroying it ; and although the public and the lovers of art cannot interfere to prevent the possessor of an esteemed ancient work from foolishly employing picture-cleaners to deface, under the pretext of cleaning or repairing, yet the execration of all intelligent people must inevitably follow such a procedure, in proportion to the estimation of the work thus lost to the public stock. The picture, when brought home from these cleaning defacers, appearing new, fresh, and altogether different from the state in which it was carried out ; the foolish proprietor is taught to believe wonders
had

had been done, and pays accordingly. I shall never forget the shocking spectacle of a picture of Claude Lorraine, which I saw at the house of one of those operators (Spiridone Roma, dead some years since), where the fine patina, all the thin oleaginous passages, delicate tints and touches, which constitute the beauty, grace, and finish of the work, were not only partially carried off by the valuable secret of a fluid made use of in what he called cleaning, and where even the very imprimatura, or ground, was in many places apparent, and consequently discharged from the colours which formed Claude's picture. What he was to do afterwards with this chaos in repairing and restoring, could be only in proportion to his own wretched skill as a landscape-painter. Titian, Rubens, Vandyk, or any other great colourist, may with advantage retouch and complete any work of their scholars, or other inferior artist, by scumbling over, tinting, and uniting the whole; but it would be ridiculous to expect any good from the converse of this: and yet what is the business of these picture-repairers, but this converse, more and more, nay infinitely degraded? as these unfortunate, though impudent people, for the most part, can do nothing of their own, and must subsist by effrontery, nostrums, and deception. But as something may be usefully done in the desirable endeavour to preserve celebrated works of the old
painters,

painters, I shall take this occasion to mention an excellent practice in use at Rome, which affords all that can be desired on this head, as it religiously and wisely respects and leaves untouched whatever there is remaining, and only attempts so to repair the parts which have perished, as to prevent their offensive or disagreeable appearance.

When I was at the Palace Borghesi, copying Titian, there were two Romans, old men and brothers, who were employed by the Prince in repairing his pictures. I had a fair opportunity of inspecting the process of these worthy old men, as they made no mystery of it, but carried on their work in the same room where I was employed with the other students, Italians, French, and Germans. Their first attention was to examine and repair the attachment of the picture to the canvass on which it was painted, and to line it, if necessary; they next so bedded the picture as to prevent its cracking when they wiped and cleaned away the dirt collected on its surface. Their next business was the chief operation, which consisted of balls of different colours, ground up to the consistence of glazier's putty, portions of which, with knives exactly resembling those used by glaziers, they mixed properly, so as to correspond with the colours of the parts in contact with the scaled or broken places which they thus filled up, afterwards carrying this blunted knife over the edges, and wiping away
any

any thing that might have foiled the sound and perfect places of the picture. Thus all was preserved that could be preserved, and the repairs, whether well or ill conducted, were at worst of little importance, as they did not interfere with those perfect and sound parts. It is unnecessary to say more on a matter so obvious, than that I am happy to rely on the zeal and public spirit of many of my hearers for the spreading of this salutary practice, and interfering wherever they may have any influence to prevent the further destruction of ancient pictures.—We shall now return to our subject, &c.

I have long seen, and from my situation as Lecturer on Painting in the Academy, have often pressed it on the attention of my hearers, that without some proper public collection of ancient art, to refer to occasionally, both our pupils and the public would be in the same bewildered situation so emphatically alluded to in the New Testament, of the people without guides, exposed to every imposture of “Lo! here is Christ. Lo! there is Christ.”—This is Titian’s manner.—No, that was his manner.—Old Giacomo Bassano, did he do his work after this or after the other way?—How far is fumbling necessary in the production of the true Venetian tones?—Upon what basis, and how much and what should be done before, after it, or with it? There is no need to mention that discernment
and

and taste must govern in the application and conduct ; but with respect to the mechanic desideratum, these questions go all the length ; and to obtain satisfactory oracular answers, we had best recur to the familiar inspection of the original pictures of these ancient masters ; and as nothing else can satisfactorily determine researches of this kind, and prevent or detect mistakes or imposition so well as this frequent familiar inspection, I could much wish that what I have so often had occasion in the Academy to urge on this subject, was known to his Majesty ; for this end I brought it forward, as it is so much and so easily in his power to gratify the wishes of the public, and complete the views of his own Institution, by graciously conferring on them this remaining favour. His royal countenance, and a very small matter, would be sufficient to begin with. But as I am not likely ever to have the honour of a hearing from his Majesty, and if I had, would unfortunately for the art and for the country have probably but little weight, I must content myself, and think it a sufficient discharge of conscience and duty, to lay the whole matter before you and your friends, who happily can have all the opportunity, weight, and consideration, that is wanting to me. You may then either lay this letter before his Majesty, as a testimony of the best discharge of humble duty within the knowledge of his Professor, or you may put
the

the matter in any other form more agreeable and proper, without any regard to me or to what I have written. You will partly see, by what follows, how long I have laboured under the weight of this business, how far it has been carried, and through what an ordeal I have passed : my patience is now quite exhausted, and almost like the traveller mentioned somewhere in Horace, who, when with all his pains and care, he could not prevent his ass from continually going to the edge of the precipice, was at last so transported with rage and indignation, as to stretch out his hands and push him down. Before any such matter as this happens with me, I shall feel happy and delivered from a world of anxiety in placing this business under the care and direction of the Gentlemen of your Society ; you can easily manage it, and will henceforward be answerable to the art and to the public for its safety and success ; carry this point, and all will be done that I wish done, as, I thank God, there is nothing to ask for myself. But as gentlemen like those of the Dilettanti Society, possessed of all the advantages of education and foreign travel, can want no information from me respecting the importance, nature, and extent, of that collection of exemplars and materials of information and study, so absolutely and indispensably necessary for advancing and perfecting the arts of Painting and Sculpture in a National Academy ; the few Extracts which follow,

low, and were copied from certain parts of my annual lectures in the academy, are therefore inserted here merely to shew my own sense of the miserable state of our collection, and of what the Academy stands so much in need of for the completion of its views.

In the Discourse on Design, read in 1785, speaking of the casts from the antiques, I found myself compelled to observe upon our “ want of public repositories of art, Royal or other collections, which might be resorted to occasionally without expence, difficulty, or loss of time. Most of our noble collections are widely separated from each other, and buried in the country, where neither the artists nor the public can derive advantage from any thing they may happen to contain; without going into details of what might, and perhaps would be done, if the public spirit was fairly called forth by some eminent example. But there is even something in the power of the Academy itself; for, by a proper application of its own funds, a respectable beginning might be made under its own roof, which in a short time would answer the most extensive purposes of utility to the arts, and entertainment to the public. At present the materials for observation in the Academy are much too scanty to afford, even to the Professor, any opportunity of bringing forward
with

“ with advantage those enlarged views of the art
 “ that are most becoming and worthy the atten-
 “ tion of students in the eighteenth century ; we
 “ have no where any pictures of the old schools,
 “ to which the students might be referred for visible
 “ examples of what they ought to study to acquire
 “ or endeavour to avoid.”

In the discourse on Chiaro-Scuro, the necessary
 investigation of the subject in hand led me to ob-
 serve, “ That I could wish, not only for the sake
 “ of the pupils and the public, but also on my
 “ own account, that our collection of plaster casts
 “ in the Academy was more ample. In the
 “ number of excellent things that must be attended
 “ to during one’s residence abroad, the impressions
 “ of many of them will unavoidably not be so
 “ fresh on the memory after some years, as to
 “ enable a man to speak of them with confidence,
 “ more particularly on such an occasion as the
 “ present ; but, from what I recollect of the happy
 “ effects produced by the skilful arrangement of
 “ alto and basso-relievo, and the perspective of the
 “ aërial as well as lineal degradations of the objects
 “ in Algardi’s famous work at St. Peter’s, in that
 “ of Puget at Paris, and some others, this mode
 “ of process is capable of producing the sublimest
 “ and most extensive effects in sculpture. What
 “ should hinder that it might not even be asso-
 “ ciated with groupes and figures in the round ?

“ For my own part, I cannot help being strongly
 “ of opinion, that such a subject as the Niobe
 “ would come upon the eye of the spectator with
 “ a much more collected force, if treated by a great
 “ artist in this way, than in the scattered manner
 “ in which this composition appeared in the Villa
 “ Medici, &c.” And, after some pages of dis-
 cussion, and a considerable enumeration of facts,
 respecting the kinds of sculptured relievo, ancient
 and modern, I am obliged to conclude the subject
 in the following manner. “ Any attempt to
 “ reconcile these passages from the ancient writers,
 “ with those incontrovertible facts respecting the
 “ state of the art, which are so glaringly testified
 “ in the remains of ancient basso-relievo and paint-
 “ ings, is better declined, at least for the present,
 “ as our Academy is too ill supplied with materials
 “ for observation : the miserable beggarly state of
 “ its library and collection of antique vestiges, I
 “ have so often had occasion to lament, that it is
 “ almost shameful to mention it to you any more.
 “ Good God ! that such a thing should be in the
 “ centre of the British Empire ; that so many
 “ difficulties should lie in the way of acquiring a
 “ sufficient collection even of plaster casts, and a
 “ place to put them in, and in such a town as
 “ London, which in all other respects is so
 “ transcendentally remarkable for its numerous pub-
 “ lic hospitals and modes of generous provision
 “ for

“ for almost every want of humanity, both of
 “ body and mind ! But in the arts there seems a
 “ peculiar curse—what occasions it ? and does it
 “ only arise from that insidious base policy which
 “ is employed to prevent those who really know,
 “ and could serve the public, from having any
 “ weight ? and is it from this, that glorious op-
 “ portunities of public service are thus daily
 “ permitted to slide away without benefit ?”

In February, 1791, the following passage was
 inserted in the Discourse on Colouring. “ Would
 “ to Heaven an opportunity was offered of plant-
 “ ing your easels before some of his (Vandyk’s)
 “ pictures on these walls ! and yet even this would
 “ be too limited ; and nothing could have pre-
 “ cipitated me on such a wish but my extreme
 “ desire, that before you are let loose upon the
 “ world, it might be in the power of the Aca-
 “ demy to afford you some, though ever so little,
 “ timely assistance in this remaining most im-
 “ portant part of the art : for really to make a
 “ just statement of our wants, when we consider
 “ the various dispositions that look for their
 “ education in an Academy, more nutriment
 “ will necessarily be required than any individual
 “ model or mode of practice can afford, however
 “ excellent it may be. In the Pope’s Academy
 “ at Rome, in that of Bologna, at Venice, and
 “ indeed in all places on the Continent, where

“ the education of young painters is attended to,
 “ it is hardly necessary to employ any further
 “ solicitude than merely providing for the students
 “ an opportunity of studying the living model
 “ and the antiques, as the churches and other
 “ great collections of pictures are ever open to
 “ them for the acquisition of the colouring,
 “ composition, and all the other great essentials
 “ of painting : but even with all this, there is pro-
 “ vided at the Campidoglio, under the same roof
 “ with the Papal Academy, a most noble col-
 “ lection of pictures of the old masters, which,
 “ whilst it affords a perpetual source of intel-
 “ lectual entertainment to the public, is a real
 “ school of instruction, where the young painter
 “ is enabled to complete and give a finish to his
 “ studies, before he expects to be called upon for
 “ the exercise of his abilities in the service of his
 “ country. When an institution of education
 “ is thus honestly provided for, conscience is
 “ easy ; every thing human is done, the rest must
 “ be left to Divine Providence. It would be
 “ wasting words to a melancholy purpose, to
 “ draw any parallel between all these happy ad-
 “ vantages of the foreign schools of painting,
 “ and the miserable assistance our Academy has
 “ to offer its pupils. We have nothing of
 “ painting to refer them to without doors ; and
 “ it has been wisely observed by our illustrious
 “ President,

“ President, that it is not the wish of the Aca-
 “ demy, that the students should endeavour to
 “ copy or to form themselves upon the pictures
 “ within. We wish them to dig in the same
 “ mines where we have laboured, to purify the
 “ metal for themselves, and fashion and work it
 “ up for public use, according to the strength
 “ and peculiar direction of their several geniuses,
 “ and thus endeavour to be, not the imitators,
 “ but the generous rivals of their predecessors.
 “ But let us not despond, the thing is right, and
 “ absolutely necessary: God will prosper it, and
 “ enable the Academy to extricate itself from
 “ the ostentatious mean appearance of undertaking
 “ more than it performs. His Majesty, our
 “ gracious Patron, loves the arts; the same be-
 “ nificent hand that raised our Academy to a
 “ school of *Drawing*, will not fail to enable it
 “ to become *really*, and not in *appearance*, a
 “ school of *Painting* also. The Parliament, the
 “ *national trustee*, is wise, liberal, and perfectly
 “ know what is for the honour and glory of the
 “ country. Painters, completed in their educa-
 “ tion, will, it is therefore to be hoped, issue
 “ from this source, to all the parts of the
 “ British Empire; and the collection of old legi-
 “ timate exemplars, which only can enable the
 “ Academy to perform all this, will not, cannot,
 “ be any longer wanting to us. To talk of

“ wanting room for such a collection, is childish
 “ and farcical; how easy is it to point out space
 “ for it! But there is no need to waste words: let
 “ me have the honour of directing your attention
 “ to a recent event, which now affords an occa-
 “ sion of beginning such a collection with every
 “ possible advantage. A considerable number of
 “ such specimens of painting as come immediately
 “ within the views of public entertainment, as
 “ well as academical exercise, may now be pur-
 “ chased; they have been brought together in a
 “ course of many years, with great assiduity,
 “ and were the constant objects of study, affec-
 “ tion, and rivalry of a great * man, whom
 “ we all know and revere; and whose various ex-
 “ ertions in the art will long remain the pride
 “ and glory of his country. I will say no more;
 “ but if these materials of study should be
 “ scattered, what a pity! When can we hope
 “ that such an assemblage of so many necessary
 “ requisites of skill, means, and inclination,
 “ should thus fortunately meet together in any
 “ man, to make such a collection again?”

In December, 1792, at a meeting of the acade-
 micians, called to consider of a situation for placing
 the cast of the Hercules Farnese, our meeting was
 in

* Sir Joshua Reynolds's collection of ancient pictures were
 sent by him at this time to the great Auction Room, in the
 Hay-market, to be sold by private contract.

in the ground floor, under the coach-way into the square, where the statue was loosely put together, and set up in the place where Sir William Chambers wished it to remain. The then president, Mr. West, and some of the academicians, seemed to differ from this opinion, and would have the figure brought up stairs; but as this seeming was no more than a political manœuvre which, after some discussion of difficulties, would be ultimately resolved into Sir William's opinion, and as I well knew that Sir Joshua Reynolds's wishes, in the charge he had entrusted to me, had no other object than to obtain the greatest possible augmentation of our collection of casts, it appeared to me most adviseable to depart from the letter of his injunction, in order to follow the spirit of it; and having therefore prepared the following paper, I read it to the Academy as we stood before the statue. “ When Sir Joshua Reynolds
 “ was confined to his room, a little before his
 “ death, he did in the presence of several friends,
 “ recommend to me to endeavour at persuading
 “ the Academy to have the statue of Hercules
 “ brought up stairs into the plaster room. I
 “ promised him, that whatever I could do should
 “ be done; but, upon more mature thinking
 “ since, I am persuaded that, as his sole object
 “ was to obtain such an extension of our collection
 “ as would be more adequate to the occasions of

“ the Academy, and to this end, wished the
 “ figure to be brought up stairs, though there
 “ should be no room to receive any thing
 “ else after it; yet as the following little plan
 “ removes Sir Joshua’s difficulty, by rendering
 “ the lower apartments more habitable and con-
 “ venient, so as to bring the statue equally into
 “ the course of academical studies, and co-operate
 “ more effectually with his and all our wishes, by
 “ allowing the most ample increase of our
 “ collection, I shall, Mr. President and Gen-
 “ tlemen, beg leave to submit it to your con-
 “ sideration.

“ As the academical repository of Grecian
 “ examples of art contribute equally to direct the
 “ studies of our young artists, and to invigorate
 “ and perfect the taste of the public, I move,
 “ that if any part of our collection is to be placed
 “ in the ‘ground apartments, that preparatory to
 “ all other consequent consideration, a committee
 “ of the Academy be appointed, in order to con-
 “ sider what will be the best mode of obtaining
 “ a proper, convenient, and handsome access, to
 “ this part of our collection in these ground
 “ apartments. And as no proper access can be
 “ had to these apartments but from the square, I
 “ submit it to their consideration, whether, at the
 “ same time, it would not be exceedingly practi-
 “ cable, by a further extension of that ground
 “ floor,

“ floor, from the King’s statue into the square,
 “ to obtain a room, even equal to the dimensions,
 “ as to length and breadth, of our present exhibi-
 “ tion room, and without the least inconve-
 “ nience or annoyance of any kind to the other
 “ offices in the square, since it need not rise to
 “ any great height, and would leave an open
 “ coach-way on the three sides, double the width
 “ of the Strand at Catharine-street, and four times
 “ the width at Exeter Change. Our exhibition room
 “ is twenty-two of my paces long; the square is,
 “ from the basement of the King’s statue to the
 “ foot pavement on the south side, 80 paces long,
 “ and 63 from each foot-pavement, east and west.
 “ The Strand is 19 paces broad from the edges of
 “ the footway, at Catherine-street, and nine paces
 “ at Exeter Change.

“ By this means the Academy would be enabled
 “ to convert some of its upper rooms into a more
 “ becoming extension of its library: the paternal
 “ care of his Majesty, and a liberal public, would
 “ soon make this library adequate to the occasions
 “ of such an institution, instead of the contracted
 “ miserable state in which it is at present. Had we
 “ but space for a few found examples of the pic-
 “ tures of the old masters, a little time would soon
 “ put it in the power of our students to finish their
 “ education, instead of running loose upon the
 “ public to subsist, as too many have, by mere
 “ drawing

“ drawing and other contracted methods of art,
 “ which must infallibly result from studies inter-
 “ rupted, not pursued to the end. With sufficient
 “ space, and a proper acknowledgment for favours
 “ received, the Academy would not long want a
 “ collection of prints equal to that royal collection
 “ of prints in the Rue de Richelieu at Paris. The
 “ late Mr. John Barnard would, according to
 “ very creditable information, have been much
 “ gratified in leaving his noble collection in this
 “ way. An enquiring mind would soon be en-
 “ abled to take such a view of these arts, as the
 “ admirable author of the advancement of learning
 “ recommends in those other arts which had been
 “ the object of his attention ; and on a view of the
 “ whole, it would appear what had been well la-
 “ boured, what had not, what was to be followed
 “ up, and what to be avoided. It will, surely, be
 “ found, upon mature consideration, that the
 “ highest service this Academy can render the
 “ public, is to be the happy means of effecting a
 “ compleat repository of all the materials necessary
 “ for such advanced and enlarged art, as is worthy
 “ the glory of the nation, and the high spirit and
 “ extended information of the age we live in. A
 “ few artists, so equipped, will do the country
 “ much and real honour ; the bulk of those we
 “ shall breed without it, will really be much
 “ injured, and with respect to the views of the
 “ age,

“ age, abortive and stunted, obliged to traffic in
 “ quackery and small ware, illiberal, mischievous
 “ to each other, and a discredit to the insti-
 “ tution.

“ *Nota Bene.* There need nothing to appear in
 “ the square, but a range of battlements, or con-
 “ tinued pedestal, eight or ten feet high, which
 “ would afford a most admirable occasion, and in
 “ the most eligible situation, of effecting that long
 “ wished for repository of those honourable testi-
 “ monies of public gratitude which, from the ex-
 “ perience of the best ages, have been found the
 “ truest incentive to heroic actions. On this battle-
 “ ment, or range of pedestals, statues of those
 “ heroes who deserved well of their country might
 “ be erected, at convenient distances from each
 “ other, with a dado of a small projection under
 “ the statue for a proper inscription; and the
 “ spaces between these dado's or dies being a little
 “ more in length than height, may be ornamented
 “ with apposite historic basso relievo's, which
 “ would open a glorious field of sculpture for the
 “ public entertainment and instruction, unequalled
 “ in Europe. The whole square of public offices
 “ would, with an admirable felicity, like another
 “ forum of Trajan, seem to have been built to give
 “ it ornament, with this remarkable difference in its
 “ favour, that these subjects of British bas-relief,
 “ being all near the eye, could be considered with
 “ convenience,

“ convenience, pleasure, and utility, all of which
 “ is lost to the spectator, from the elevated situa-
 “ tion of the bas-relief, on the beautiful column of
 “ Trajan, to the deep, never-ceasing regret of all
 “ lovers of virtù.

“ The entrance to these ground apartments
 “ might be handsomely contrived to descend in the
 “ two angles behind the King’s statue, and so
 “ ornamented as to group and mass sublimely
 “ with the statue, and still further associated with
 “ a noble obelisk, or other proper ornament be-
 “ tween, that might, gracefully and without an-
 “ noyance, afford the necessary communication
 “ between the fires below and the external air. It
 “ but rarely happens that so many fortunate cir-
 “ cumstances can meet together, with a felicity so
 “ united as almost to appear like magic.

“ Thus this mere extension of your ground
 “ apartments, at present useless, furnishing the
 “ necessary receptacle for the fine monuments of
 “ ancient art, whilst, at the same time, it ad-
 “ ditionally affords the most eligible situation in
 “ the centre of two great cities, and (which is the
 “ characteristic of true taste) with the least con-
 “ ceivable effort and expence, for another reposi-
 “ tory of monuments still more deeply interesting
 “ to the art and to the nation; plaster casts of
 “ demi-gods and ancient heroes within; and with-
 “ out, what the British empire shall gloriously pro-
 “ duce

“ duce of the same character, in the more durable
 “ materials of bronze and marble. Gentlemen,
 “ you see evidently the means are in your power ;
 “ use them, and deserve well of your country.

Having thus acquitted myself of the promise made to Sir Joshua, of the duty I owed the Academy, and habituated to the kind of materials I had to work on, it gave me neither surprise nor concern to find the matter got rid of by Mr. Wyatt's observing, that this paper contained something which ought not to be lost, that it might hereafter be of use, whenever the ground should be purchased between the Academy and Exeter Change. Such a thing might happen, and then we should want for nothing. As Mr. Wyatt was lately made the Queen's architect, and was supposed to know what would be agreeable, the matter ended without further discussion; and, leaving poor Hercules to screen himself as well as he could from colds and damps, we went up stairs.

On the 10th of October, 1796, I received the following letter from the Academy :

“ SIR,

“ You are desired to meet the President, and
 “ the rest of the academicians, at the Royal Academy, on Monday the 7th of November, at
 “ seven o'clock in the evening, to elect one associate. Inclosed is a list of the candidates.”

At this meeting of the 7th of November, the Secretary, as usual, read the minutes of the former meeting, which consisted of the matter respecting the giving of pensions to such academicians or their widows, as came within a certain specified description; and, without any pause between, proceeded to read the business for the election of one associate, and to distribute the lists for that end. After the election, when I saw the academicians going to disperse, I desired to be informed, why the business that lay over from the former meeting had not been finished to-night? The President said it was finished; that it was read, and he had signed it. I observed it had not been put to the vote: the President, Messrs. Tyler, Farrington, Yenn, Bacon, and some others, said it ought not; that the time for voting was on the former night, and that such was the rule of the Academy. I told them I was sure that the practice and rule of the Academy was quite otherways, and that, relying on this usage of the Academy, I had prepared some objections to the passing of this pension-business as a law, and which I intended stating to the Academy at the proper time, which time was when the President should, as usual, after the reading of the minutes, get up and say, "*Those gentlemen who are of opinion that they ought to confirm the minutes of the last meeting, hold up their hands; —the contrary, theirs.*" That this had not been done;

done ; that it was what I waited for ; that it was not only the usual practice of the Academy, but of all assemblies and societies of men ; that this, and no other, could be the reason for having two meetings, the better to consider and digest all business. They, however, insisted that the matter was finished, and that I could not be permitted to make any objections. Upon my requesting that they would at least hear what I had to object, whether they proceeded to any further consideration of the matter or not, after much entreaty, and shameful contest, I was at last indulged in reading what follows :

“ In the letter of summons for convening the last
 “ general meeting a month since, the business
 “ specified in that letter, was only what number
 “ of associates should be elected at the next meet-
 “ ing ; consequently, the vacancies being only
 “ three, the more important consideration, who
 “ amongst the candidates should be elected to fill
 “ any number of those vacancies within the three,
 “ being reserved for the second meeting, was,
 “ perhaps, the reason why so many of the acade-
 “ micians did not come to the first ; and that it
 “ was owing to a mere accident that I was not in
 “ the number of those who, swayed by that reason,
 “ did not attend. — Those academicians then who
 “ were absent at this first meeting, as well as many
 “ of those who were present, must be exceedingly
 “ shocked

“ shocked to find that the principal object prepared
 “ for the consideration and discussion of that meet-
 “ ing, was of quite another nature than had been
 “ specified in the summons, and was indeed of the
 “ last, deepest importance to the reputation and
 “ existence of the Academy. In order, therefore,
 “ to prevent the Academy being surprised into any
 “ error, and that so disorderly and shocking a
 “ business shall not happen again, I move, that
 “ though it be the business of the Council to ar-
 “ range and prepare matter for the consideration of
 “ the Academy, and that the Council ought to
 “ have every invitation and encouragement to pro-
 “ duce such matter, of whatever kind, at any
 “ general meeting, and even whether specified in
 “ the summons or not, yet that it be enacted, as
 “ an invariable law, that the Academy shall never
 “ proceed to give any vote at the general meeting
 “ on any business proposed by the Council, which
 “ has not been specified in the letter of summons
 “ for that meeting.

“ I also move, in order that a proper record of
 “ the transactions of the Academy may remain on
 “ its books, that the business proposed in the letter
 “ of summons for the general meeting, be copied
 “ into our books, at the head of the minutes of the
 “ transactions of such meeting.

“ I further move, that the Academy recom-
 “ mend to the Council to reconsider the whole
 “ business

“ business respecting the security and disposal of
 “ the property of the Academy, and that some
 “ proper means be adopted to obtain for the
 “ Academy, such a chartered and legally corporate
 “ existence, as will connect it with the nation, and
 “ as the most dignified, simple, and best adapted
 “ method of precluding litigations or other em-
 “ barrassments in the management of weighty pro-
 “ perty, in which great artists are so likely to be
 “ less experienced than more inferior people. The
 “ Academy ought not to hesitate on this occasion,
 “ when the great and respectable law authority
 “ (Serjeant Adair), whose opinion we have sought,
 “ has, with a delicacy worthy himself, insinuated
 “ this advice, in generous and liberal addition to
 “ his answer to the question on which he was con-
 “ sulted.

“ Whether the Academy shall, or shall not,
 “ endeavour to obtain this most satisfactory and
 “ best possible method of securing its property by a
 “ charter ; I move, that some part of this property,
 “ which may exceed the necessary uses of the
 “ Academy and its commendable ordinary chari-
 “ ties, be nobly and wisely employed in obtaining
 “ an extension of their space, for the exhibition of
 “ great works in sculpture, the want of which has
 “ been so long and vexatiously experienced and
 “ complained of. The introduction of works of
 “ this kind, would be the best corrective for that

“ tawdry, frippery relish, which the repeated
 “ exhibitions of the more trifling, inconsequential
 “ departments of painting, is apt to generate.
 “ Let me add here (enclosed within a parenthesis),
 “ that the Academy has but very imperfectly dis-
 “ charged its duty to the public, respecting those
 “ monuments of sculpture, the superintendence of
 “ which has been entrusted to them: and I must
 “ request your indulgence for my entreating and
 “ moving that this matter may be shortly enquired
 “ into, as prior to these *deeds of trust* confided to
 “ the Academy. I had the misfortune of recom-
 “ mending, in a printed work, page 93, diffemi-
 “ nated on a very public occasion thirteen years
 “ since, that this confidence should be placed in
 “ the Academy. I therefore move, that a com-
 “ mittee be appointed to enquire into the conduct
 “ which ought necessarily to be adopted by the
 “ Academy in all future references of public trust,
 “ whether of sculpture or painting, or even of
 “ architectural designs, in which the judgment of
 “ the Academy, properly and conscientiously
 “ called forth, might be of considerable advantage
 “ to the public.

“ I also move, that some part of our property
 “ be laid out in the purchase of some one or more
 “ exemplars of ancient art, and a room or rooms
 “ to put them in. This beginning, (which would
 “ come so gracefully and with such peculiar pro-
 “ priety

“ priety from the Academy) would, with a gene-
 “ rous public that only wants such an occasion of
 “ directing its energy, soon fructify and extend
 “ to a National Gallery, (*) which, whilst
 “ it would compleat the views of the Aca-
 “ demy with respect to the education of its pupils,
 “ would also no less beneficially extend to the
 “ improvement and entertainment of the nation at
 “ large. There are many old famous pictures in
 “ this kingdom: whether any of these should be
 “ bestowed on this public gallery, or only lent to
 “ it for any given number of years, to be replaced
 “ by others, the end would be equally answered;
 “ and, by proper inscriptions on the frames, the
 “ public would know its benefactors, who would
 “ be paid in a glorious celebrity, proportioned to
 “ the utility and satisfaction they diffused.

“ A proper attention to the obtaining these
 “ desiderata, would not only appear more becom-
 “ ing the reputation of the age and nation, and
 “ more consistent with the noble disinterested con-
 “ duct hitherto adopted by the Academy, but

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“ would

* The famous Cartoons of Rafaele, which were purchased with
 the public money, might stand gloriously at the head of such an
 Academical or National Gallery; or if they should be thought to
 occupy too much space, and that finely coloured oil pictures
 would be more immediately useful—some of the royal palaces
 abound with works of Vandyck, of that description, which might
 be well spared. With such a nest-egg, and space, the rest would
 soon follow.

“ would eventually and finally be more profitable
 “ and advantageous to the interests of superior
 “ artists, and the widows and relatives they
 “ may happen to leave behind them, than
 “ what has been proposed by dissipating this pro-
 “ perty of the Academy, in pensions annexed to
 “ the mere frequency of exhibition, without any
 “ regard to the degree of importance or contemp-
 “ tibility of the matter exhibited. Such a proce-
 “ dure would inevitably reverse all right, and
 “ produce mischief and dishonour instead of
 “ benefit. The nobler occasions of exertion do
 “ not so frequently occur as those that are paltry
 “ and worthless, not to say mischievous; and the
 “ answer of Æsop’s Lions in the fable, would
 “ admirably apply in this case. ‘ *You produce a
 ‘ great many at a litter, and often: but what are
 ‘ they? Foxes. I indeed have but one at a time,
 ‘ but you should remember this one is a Lion.*’
 “ It is full time, Gentlemen, that we should recol-
 “ lect, in this Academy, that our art has the glory
 “ of being a *moral art*, with extensive means, pe-
 “ culiarly universal, and applicable to all ages and
 “ nations, to the improvement and deepest interests
 “ of society; and although, from the unfortunate
 “ combinations that sometimes occur, we have
 “ had more frequent occasion to decorate the ex-
 “ hibition walls with pictures of live or dead par-
 “ tridges, mackerel on deal boards, or such like
 “ human

“ human or other trifling matters, every whit as
 “ unmeaning and inapplicable to any great or
 “ ethical purpose; yet surely, surely, if the Aca-
 “ demy cannot every year gratify the public with
 “ a Gymnasium at Athens, or the Stadium at
 “ Olympia, it will ill become them to encourage,
 “ by their countenance and their pensions, so
 “ horrid and scandalous a reverse and degradation.
 “ These opinions, which I hope will meet the
 “ wishes of a majority of the Academicians, I am
 “ happy to deliver on such an occasion as the pre-
 “ sent, where they are so fairly, so necessarily
 “ called for; and that, whatever determination
 “ the Academy may choose to adopt in this business,
 “ these sentiments, either in the way of advice or
 “ protest, must now, in the order of things, re-
 “ main upon their books, for the inspection of
 “ those who may come after us, and who, it is to
 “ be hoped, will have other and higher views of
 “ the concerns of art, than those arising from the
 “ undue, political artifices of *combination* and
 “ *cabal*.” (Signed) JAMES BARRY.

Having finished the reading of the above mo-
 tions, I added, verbally, that my end was now
 answered; for, that as things were ordered in the
 Academy, I was satisfied with the mere proposing
 what was for the honour of the Academy, and of
 the nation, without much solicitude or anxiety at
 its not being adopted; and that I had recom-

mended this rule to our late President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, observing to him that, instead of uneasiness, he ought rather to enjoy the double satisfaction of proposing, on his own part, becoming honourable matter, which his opponents would have the infamy of rejecting, and that at least it was always in his power to prevent the matter's being suppressed or lost. At two or three different times since I asked Mr. West whether these resolutions of the Academy, respecting this pension business, had been carried to the Palace for his Majesty's acquiescence and signature: he repeatedly told me they had not as yet; and as some time has elapsed, and that we have had no report of his Majesty having signed them, it is to be hoped the majority have altered their opinion, and will at least have the grace to let it drop, and spare and pay such respect to the King's signature, as not to solicit for it on such an unworthy occasion.

As I could not prevail with the majority at this meeting to appoint any committee for enquiring into the proper mode we ought to adopt, in discharging these *public trusts* confided to the Academy, and as it seemed as if they wished to smuggle the whole business, and would not even suffer these motions to remain on their books, and as so much time has since elapsed, I feel myself bound, by a duty superior to all other considerations, to embrace the opportunity that now offers, and to put the

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the public in possession of such a simple, but entire statement of the facts relating to these *public trusts*, as will, I think, be fully sufficient for the perfect comprehension of the whole business, and almost render any comments unnecessary.

On February 27, 1784, two Letters were read in the Academy, from the House of Assembly in Jamaica, to Stephen Fuller, Esq. The following are copies.

“ SIR,

“ Inclosed is a resolution of the House of Assembly on the 20th day of February last, and also a copy of an order upon the Receivers General, relative to that resolution; you will perceive it is the wish of the House to express the sense this Island entertains of the services of Lord Rodney, and that a statue is thought to be the most honourable compliment which can be paid. The House will object to no expence that may be necessary to procure one of the most finished kind. The money (1000l.) ordered to be remitted by the Receiver-General, is intended as an advance to accelerate the work; and when it is completed, whatever sum shall be found to be deficient, the House will provide for it on the first intimation.

“ The pedestal on which the statue is to be placed, must be richly ornamented, and representations of the achievements of the hero, whose

fame is intended to be transmitted to our posterity, ought to be sculptured on three of the squares or dies of the pedestal in basso-relievo, particularly the memorable action which insured the safety of Jamaica ; and on the fourth, a short inscription, correspondent with the resolutions of the House. The plan of the whole work should be well considered and digested, and premia offered for the best designs, to be approved of by the Artists of the Royal Academy ; and, when the designs shall have been adopted, the most eminent statuary must be employed to carry them into execution. The statue and its pedestal are to be enclosed by a handsome ballustrade ; and, we think, a flight of stone steps up to the foot of the pedestal, would be necessary to give it a proper elevation. We commit this business to your care and attention, hoping that this tribute of our gratitude and applause will do credit to the artist and honour to the island.

“ We are, Sir,

“ Your humble Servants,”

(Signed by Thirty-two Names.)

House of Assembly, Feb. 20, 1783.

“ Resolved, that it be recommended to the House, to direct the Committee of Correspondence to write to Stephen Fuller, Esq. agent for this island, desiring him to apply to the most eminent artists in England, to prepare an elegant marble
statue

statue of Lord Rodney, with a handsome pedestal to the same, to be erected in the Parade of Spanish Town, in commemoration of the glorious victory obtained by that gallant commander, and the brave officers and seamen serving under him, over the French fleet, on the 12th day of April, 1782.

By the House,

SAMUEL HOWELL, Cl. Assembly."

On reading these letters in the Royal Academy, it was resolved, that Messrs. Bacon, Carlini, Nollekens, Tyler, and Wilton, be desired to prepare models for the statue by the 5th of April next, and send them to the Academy.

J. REYNOLDS, President.

F. M. NEWTON, Secretary.

On the 5th of April there were but two of those gentlemen who sent models, viz. Mess. Bacon and Tyler, and the work was adjudged to Mr. Bacon. Many members of the Academy were dissatisfied with this mode of procedure; Sir Joshua in particular complained that it wanted a certain *éclat*, and in some measure defeated the very liberal wishes of the gentlemen who entrusted this commission to the Academy; that if hereafter we should receive any other similar commission, it would be better to invite a general competition by public advertisement, and make an academical public exposure of the work.

After

After Sir Joshua's death, the following letter from Fort St. George, addressed to the President and Council, was read in the Academy.

“ Gentlemen,

“ We have the honour to enclose you a copy of the Resolutions of the Inhabitants of Madras, by which it was voted, that a statue of the Right Hon. Earl Cornwallis should be erected in Fort St. George, at the public expence:

“ In order to give the more expansion to this testimony of respect and esteem for Earl Cornwallis, the inhabitants of Madras resolved on making application to the Royal Academy of Great Britain, composed of members whose professional talents are justly appreciated by all Europe. In conformity with their resolutions, we have the honour to address you, requesting you will be pleased to nominate an artist to execute a pedestrian statue of the Earl.

“ Did we apprehend there could be any difference of opinion respecting the Noble Personage who is the subject of this address, an apology might be considered as due to you in the name of our constituents and ourselves; but we trust our expectations are not ill-founded, when we profess to flatter ourselves with your most cheerful compliance with this request.

“ Sir John Call will have the honour of transmitting to you this letter: and we have requested
the

the favour of him to communicate to the artist you may recommend, such information as is necessary for the execution of the statue.

“ We have the honour to be, &c.”

(Signed by Seven Gentlemen of the Committee.)

Fort St. George, Oct. 6, 1792.

All the sculptors of the Academy refused making any models of competition for this statue, except Mr. Banks, who, after a given time sent two models for the Academy to choose, one in parliamentary robes, the other not: which of those models was fixed upon, has escaped my recollection; but I well remember, that amongst the reasons given by the other sculptors, why they would not concur, there was much mention of combination and cabal: that the most insignificant members of the Academy had made such an extensive and politic confederacy as to dispose of every thing that went by vote: who should be in the Council; who should be in the superintendence of the living Academy as Visitors; who should be made an Associate or an Academician: in short, all was at their disposal, and nothing was given but with a view to the increase of their power. Mr. Nollekens, amongst other reasons for his declining it, gave me this, that he was sure that such a certain person (whom he named) would have twenty votes from this cabal: the answer I gave him was, that
he,

he, and several other men of ability in the Academy, might thank themselves for it; that the poisoned cup was at last come to their own lips; and that if, at our meeting for the election of a President to succeed Sir Joshua, they had the grace and discretion to adopt the motion I then brought forward, of binding ourselves and all future Academicians, by an oath, to vote conscientiously in all cases of election and adjudication, the offices and transactions of the Academy would then have had some chance of being carried on with whatever strength, propriety, and dignity, was within our reach, and the shameful matter now complained of, as well as other recent matters of equal disgrace and vexation, could not have occurred. It is evident enough, that if influence, envy, and combination, could be chained down, and kept from acting in the business, even the meanest artist in the Academy had too much skill not to know who was best fitted by education and talents to fill the several offices of the Academy with the most becoming lustre and utility; or who amongst us was most likely to execute any public trust, with the greatest probability of adding to the reputation and celebrity of the country, and of the Institution. It is impossible for any artist to mistake or lose his way in such matters. Let us then not blame Providence and our understandings for that which (in our hearts we know) is reprobated by both, and which, in
fairness,

fairness, is only imputable to our fordid, rascally election, that would selfishly, brutally, and malignantly, endeavour to obscure, vilify, and destroy whatever excellence it cannot pretend to; and whatever it is obliged to relinquish to its rivals, its next wish generally is to connect it with maiming circumstances, and to see it in hands not calculated to get much honour by it. Hence it is, that all wise legislators have ever insisted upon the security of an oath, in order to bind down selfishness, to stake its superior eternal interests and hopes, after this short, transitory life, as the pledge and hostage for the just, true, and faithful discharge of the testimony and judgment that may be required from him: and let Sir William Chambers chicane as much as he pleases, about the more convenient principle of honour, as he calls it, yet, surely, it is absurd to suppose, that a regulation which is found necessary in all well-ordered governments, should not be attended with some utility in the Royal Academy. But, to quit reasoning and come to facts: Mr. Wilton also, on my twitting him on his not concurring, laughingly asked me, Whether, as matters were disposed of in the Academy, I would concur, were I in his situation? My answer was, Certainly not: and you might have seen, that for some time past I have not only declined giving any vote, but that, in the most public manner, I threw my list in the fire, instead
of

of marking and putting it into the box. However, thus matters went respecting this trust confided to the Academy; and I suppose that some person (most likely an interested sculptor) must have informed the East India Company, how their liberal intentions respecting this statue of Earl Cornwallis were so unfortunately, but palpably defeated in the Royal Academy. Nothing but this can account for their adopting a different mode of conduct on the subsequent occasion, of their erecting a statue to the memory of Sir William Jones; for it appears in that transaction, that they no longer paid any regard to the judgment of the Academy, but made choice of a sculptor themselves; and the Academy would have had no knowledge of the matter, had it not been for the mere accident of our having a Committee of the Academy in some measure connected with the erecting of monuments in St. Paul's Church; and as the monument was to be placed there, we accordingly received the following letter from the Dean and Chapter of that Cathedral:

“ The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's having, in consequence of an application from the Hon. the Directors of the East India Company, consented to admit into their Cathedral, a monument to the memory of the late Sir William Jones, and having agreed that it shall be placed in the North
West

West angle, exactly opposite to Mr. Howard's, in the South East angle, and the Chapter having approved of the design presented by Mr. Bacon, as far as regards emblem, sentiment, and types; they request the Committee of the Royal Academy to inspect the drawing, and to favour the Dean and Chapter with their opinion as to its suitability to the situation, in point of magnitude and conformity in its general composition to those in correspondent situations, so that it may eventually become an ornament to the building."

Chapter-House, Dec. 3, 1796.

To the Committee of the Royal Academy,
Somerfet-House.

As concealment is rather pernicious, than of any use, particularly in those who were entrusted to act for public bodies, I shall not scruple to say, that the Committee (of which I was one) found themselves much embarrassed, as every thing essential had been already determined by the East India Company and the Dean and Chapter; and there was nothing reserved for the consideration of the Academy, or its Committee, that could not have been as well determined by the vergers or beadle, as it required no professional skill to say whether the standing figure of Sir William Jones was in conformity with the standing figures of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Howard. We were only to
judge

judge of magnitude and conformity; and, I do not know, but I believe we were not at liberty to say, that the sooner this conformity was broken by the election of some other artist, and a very different arrangement, the better and more creditable it would be both for the church, and for the nation. However, that we might not appear to have been entirely useless, a resolution was drawn up, in which we recommended to the Dean and Chapter, not to suffer any more iron railing in the church, and to take away that which had been placed before the statues already erected.

Although, in the writing of this letter, it was my intention to withhold myself from making any reflections, and, as much as may be, simply to state facts, yet there is something so deeply interesting to the reputation, the public honour, of the Royal Academy in this last matter, respecting the statue of Sir William Jones, that shame and indignation will not permit us to hurry over it. Every man who wished the perfection of national art, and rejoiced at whatever tended to discountenance and to discontinue that mean jobbing which had so long disgraced the art and the country, must have had great satisfaction in the very noble instance above-mentioned, respecting the conduct of the inhabitants of Jamaica, in the affair of Lord Rodney's statue, as well as in the other instance, in the year 1792, when so distinguished
a body

a body as the Honourable the East India Company came forward, in the handsomest, most patriotic manner, and confided the public trust, respecting the statue of Earl Cornwallis, to the skill and patriotism of the Royal Academy. So far all was well, honourable, desirable. But behold, four years after, in 1796, the same Honourable the East India Company felt itself under the disagreeable necessity of adopting a contrary mode of conduct, and, notwithstanding its former polite recognition, in 1792, of the importance of the judgment of the Academy, are forced upon the harsh expedient of withdrawing this confidence from the Academy, and determining for themselves this other matter respecting the statue of Sir William Jones. One cannot without regret think of the suffering delicacy of such a Society in its progress to this pass. However, if this disgrace arose, as no doubt it did, from the East India Company's dissatisfaction at seeing no concurrence and competition for the commission entrusted to the Academy, but on the contrary, that, without any becoming graceful circumstance that might reflect splendor, either on the Company, the Academy, or the work, it was, with the most disgusting, obscure privacy, given away to the artist who executed it, merely because he was the only academician who did offer; all the rest absolutely refusing, and many of them even more than

hinting at their terror of cabal and combination, &c. it must then be honestly acknowledged, that the East India Company acted rightly in withdrawing its confidence : and it is certain that no such matters of public trust ought in future be deputed to the Academy, as it would only embarrass them, and be a further notification of their disgraceful situation, without rendering any service to the public.* If we were to take for granted what is so generally said by so many of the academicians and associates, by the very exhibitors and pupils, nay, which must have made its way to the notice even of the East India Company, as would, I dare say, be soon found by any person who would be at the trouble of enquiring into the reasons for their change of conduct in the business of the
statue

* Although the Honourable the Directors of the East India Company, and the inhabitants of Madras, are not identically one and the same, yet the affair of the statue of so estimable a personage as Earl Cornwallis, voted by the inhabitants of Madras, and its reference to the judgment of the Royal Academy, must undoubtedly, on such an occasion, have been done with the knowledge and hearty concurrence of the Honourable the Directors of the Company, and that they, the Directors, afterwards, in the business of the statue of Sir William Jones, had a very different opinion of the interference of the Academy, and proceeded accordingly. This is the construction most favourable to the Academy, which the matter will admit of, as it would be much worse to suppose that people, at the distance of Madras, had a higher opinion of the importance of the judgment of the Academy, than was entertained of them by the Honourable the Directors who lived with them in the same town.

statue of Sir William Jones; taking it then for granted, that there does exist an undue, low, politic combination in the Academy, which, by disposing of the majority of its votes, thus intimidates men of ability from venturing upon that concurrence which may be called for by the nation, or by any honourable distinguished member of it, yet it is very possible, that such combination might never have intended to carry matters to such a length; I think they would not; it would certainly be bad policy, very inconsistent with the rules of that necessary cunning which must give support and continuance to clandestine associations, to meddle in matters of such great magnitude, as, by the *éclat* of their disgrace and mischief, might rouse too much of the public attention, and stimulate towards obtaining the necessary redress, as has generally been in most cases of abuse, which providentially receive their death-wound and destruction from the very ambition and impudent wantonness of their excesses. It is much safer, and more practicable, to content themselves with the more moderate ambition of strengthening their power and interest, by governing in the election of associates and academicians, by putting their partisans and abettors, whether qualified for it or not, into the superintendence of the living Academy; four-and-twenty guineas for two months visitorship will compensate for the *ennui* of lounging

so many hours (48) in a situation which can be of no use to the students, or almost to themselves, the money excepted. It is also not a little gratifying to have it in their power to keep whoever they choose out of those rotatory offices of the visitorship and council, however they may be qualified for rendering dignified and effectual service to the institution. So far they are right; there is no other way of giving stability and continuance to this odious combination. Whilst their ambition is confined to these matters, all is safe; their opponents will not dare to complain, from the mere shame of appearing to have any contest about such matters, and with a bundle of obscurity and worthlessness, which, though of very little importance out of the Academy, is notwithstanding but too well known and felt in it, from the circumstance of its confederacy and association. Thus they might have gone on for ever, without detection; and it is only such a circumstance as this, of the disgust of the East India Company, that happily could administer occasion of sufficient publicity for pulling them into the light. The Honourable the East India Company has rendered an essential service to national art, by being the happy means of discovering to the public such an odious abuse, so mischievous and obstructive to national efforts, so unbecoming a Royal Institution of Arts, and even of arts hitherto so peculiarly distinguished

distinguished by the epithet *liberal*. 'Tis an old remark, that the remedy is easy when the disease is discovered; and as both the disease and its cure are altogether unconnected with the affairs of state, with the interests and views either of Whigs or Tories, of Aristocrats or Democrats, and can relate to nothing but the glory of the Arts and of the Country, by whomsoever its affairs may be administered, they would all have an equal interest in stifling this most odious of all jacobinical confederacies, where the mere scum and offal direct and govern. This being the case, there is then no danger of incurring blame from any man whom one would wish to respect. I shall therefore cheerfully proceed to state my own original idea of this remedy, which thirteen years since I foresaw would be necessary, when, in page 94 of my account of the pictures in the Great Room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c. at the Adelphi, after a good deal of previous matter pressing the necessity for it, I earnestly recommended to all societies, corporations, &c. "*That the judgment of the Royal Academy should be recommended to on all public occasions, and that the academicians should, in all cases of election and adjudication, be bound by an oath.*" It now remains, that, either from his Majesty's recommendation, or from whatever other quarter, the Academy be induced to rouse itself, and see the

neceſſity of adopting this meaſure of an oath, ſince it is ſo very apparent that the ſatisſactory proper diſcharge of any *public truſt* is not practicable in that body without it; and then many Academicians, reſpectable for their integrity, delicacy, and abilities, who at preſent ſhrink into corners, will be happy to come forward, and aſſiſt in putting the Royal Academy into the ſituation of re-inſtating itſelf in the good opinion of the Honourable the Eaſt India Company, or any other National or Corporate Society that may have the patriotic wiſh to be directed, on any future occaſions, by its profeſſional judgment and ſkill; ſo much I thought it neceſſary to ſtate reſpecting theſe public truſts, which, I hope, will ſhortly be brought into ſuch an order, as will enable the Academy to diſcharge its part with ſuch ſatisſaction, brilliancy and glory, to all the parties concerned, as might very well, and ſhould always, accompany tranſactions of ſo generous and exemplary a nature.

I ſhall now infer the concluſion of my Lecture on Colouring, as it was read in the Academy in February laſt; and you will, I hope, excuſe whatever tautologies may occur, as the nature and circumſtances of the caſe made it not only impoſſible, but even ineligible, to avoid them.

“ Nothing can be more conducive to the true
 “ dignity or worthleſſneſs of a people, to their
 “ real happineſs, or real miſery, than the way in
 “ which

“ which they are employed in dispersing that
 “ wealth, or overplus, which exceeds what is
 “ necessary for the conservation of their existence;
 “ as it is from this root, or great source, that
 “ public happiness or misery flows over the land,
 “ with an energy and expansion proportioned to
 “ the quantum of nutriment supplied. It has
 “ accordingly been the leading and principal ob-
 “ ject, in all wise and orderly civil establishments,
 “ to take care that such an important and ever-
 “ operating agent, as the diffusion of wealth,
 “ should have the most useful, salutary tendency,
 “ or direction. And, as the greatest evils arise
 “ from the abuses of the best things, so it has
 “ ever happened, that the sinister, selfish, wicked
 “ direction, and application of this public over-
 “ plus, by the governing power, whether in
 “ spreading external violence and devastation, or
 “ interior corruptions, have ever been the ulti-
 “ matum of the public calamity and misery. This
 “ matter may not require much attention in
 “ countries that afford little more than the means
 “ of a bare subsistence, but it becomes of infinite
 “ importance in such nations as are exposed to
 “ a vast influx of wealth, which experience has
 “ shewn can never lie dormant; and if it be not
 “ employed in arts that afford occupation, and
 “ useful intellectual entertainment to the people at
 “ large, will infallibly operate destructively, and

“ produce such a corruption of public principle, as
 “ must finally end in a worse than savage ferocity,
 “ and the consequent utter subversion of all civil
 “ establishments.

“ Impressed with this view of things, one
 “ cannot, without great satisfaction observe, how
 “ much has been wisely done in bringing forward
 “ ingenious arts for the entertainment and
 “ occupation of the public mind; and this in
 “ many of the trifling towns, and beggarly
 “ convents on the continent, even circumstanced
 “ as those places and the times were, with such
 “ poor materials of education, and such small
 “ means. What then must we think of this
 “ great metropolis of the British Empire, sur-
 “ rounded, and having within its reach, all the
 “ cultivation and improved advantages of the
 “ eighteenth century! How melancholy to reflect,
 “ that from all the immense wealth which, for a
 “ long time past, has been accumulated by the
 “ industry, ingenuity, and extensive commerce of
 “ the country, that, in the squandering or circu-
 “ lation of so many millions, so little has been
 “ done towards the intellectual entertainment of
 “ the public or of posterity! With respect to the
 “ arts, our poor neglected public are left to form
 “ their hearts and their understandings upon those
 “ lessons, not of morality and philanthropy, but
 “ of envy, malignity, and horrible disorder,
 “ which

“ which every where stare them in the face, in the
 “ profligate caricatura furniture of print-shop
 “ windows, from Hyde-Park Corner to White-
 “ chapel. Better, better far, there had been no
 “ art, than thus to pervert and employ it to pur-
 “ poses so base, and so subversive of every thing
 “ interesting to society. The poor emigrants and
 “ foreigners who crowd our streets, good God !
 “ what opinion must they form of such a scene,
 “ whenever they are permitted to reflect, in some
 “ corner removed from the stun of carriages
 “ full of pageantry, mummary, and dissipation,
 “ which infest almost all places ! These strangers
 “ have here no galleries like the Luxemburgh,
 “ filled with intellectual entertainment, to receive
 “ them *gratis* twice a week : no library of prints,
 “ like that in the Rue de Richelieu, where they
 “ might contemplate whatever the industry and
 “ genius, the youth, progress and perfection, of
 “ modern Europe, have been enabled to add, to
 “ every vestige of perfection remaining of all the
 “ preceding ages and countries.

“ I had great hopes, about ten years since,
 “ that something of this kind would have been
 “ done by the Academy itself. About that time
 “ there was a great talk in the Academy of pur-
 “ chasing the estate belonging to the chartered
 “ Society of Artists, consisting of the great rooms
 “ and the space adjoining, on the opposite side of
 “ the street, now called the Lyceum ; and Sir
 “ Joshua

“ Joshua Reynolds (of glorious memory), our
 “ then President, generously offered to lend the
 “ whole, or such part of his excellent collection
 “ of pictures of the old masters, as we should
 “ think necessary for the study of our young
 “ artists, to complete, as much as may be, the
 “ education held out in the Academy, by properly
 “ enabling the students to become painters as
 “ as well as draughtsmen, and thus happily
 “ avoiding the abortive way of finishing their
 “ studies in the Academy, which at present must
 “ unfortunately be the case of too many of them :
 “ surely, surely, without some timely assistance
 “ of this kind, all our students must be more or
 “ less injured, and many of them ruined for ever.
 “ Even in the Papal Academy at Rome, although
 “ the students have, for the colouring and me-
 “ chanical conduct of their work, the churches to
 “ recur to, ever open and filled, as all the world
 “ know, with most excellent exemplars, yet, in
 “ addition to this assistance, there is, even under
 “ the very roof of their Academy, provided for
 “ their use and benefit, the admirable collection
 “ of pictures in the Campidoglio. But, not to
 “ stray from the concerns of our own Academy,
 “ this excellent intention of obtaining a collection
 “ had been then carried into effect, had not Sir
 “ Joshua been too timid, or too fond of quiet
 “ (which amounts to the same), and unhappily
 “ suffered

“ suffered himself and his excellent scheme to be
 “ over-ruled by Sir William Chambers.

“ Were we to lay aside all conscientious dis-
 “ charge of this trust the Academy has undertaken,
 “ respecting the education of its pupils and the
 “ public, were we even to take no other than a
 “ sordid view of this matter, and consider it in
 “ a mere pecuniary light, the Academy might,
 “ if it chose, be a gainer in the traffic that such
 “ a procedure would occasion; they might, in
 “ addition to Sir Joshua’s collection of ancient
 “ pictures, and, in lieu of them, in case they
 “ should be withdrawn, so contrive the matter as
 “ to make it eligible for Noblemen, or other
 “ possessors of pictures of the old schools, to
 “ lend them for a given time to the Academy,
 “ and by this means afford a standing Exhibition,
 “ perhaps not less profitable than the Panorama,
 “ but certainly much more beneficial in the
 “ propagation of good taste and intellectual
 “ satisfaction. Thus, with their annually in-
 “ creasing funds, properly disposed of, the Aca-
 “ demy might soon see itself in possession of such
 “ a library of all matters relating to art, and of
 “ such a collection of plaster-casts, in the round
 “ and in bas-relief, as would complete all their
 “ views of utility respecting the education of
 “ their pupils, and the entertainment and in-
 “ formation of a public that, experience has long
 “ shewn,

“ shewn, is too high-spirited to fail them, or
 “ even to be outdone by them on so generous
 “ an occasion. The want of such a collection
 “ occasionally to recur to, must be mortifyingly
 “ felt by every artist who has any thing to do
 “ with great undertakings, however formed and
 “ finished his education may be: like the ne-
 “ cessary facts which form the tissue of history,
 “ the want or deficiency in any of them would
 “ be a blemish in the most excellent work, and
 “ the more to be regretted as the historian is the
 “ more admired for his felicity and skill in
 “ conducting all the other parts. The practi-
 “ cability of this scheme is so evident, that it is
 “ even matter of wonder that some of our picture
 “ and other dealers in virtù, have not extended
 “ their plans by employing a few thousands in
 “ this way: however, such a scheme of accele-
 “ rated, multiplied advantage, is certainly an
 “ enterprise better calculated for a Society that
 “ is eternal, than for a short-lived individual,
 “ subject to so many contingent interruptions and
 “ disadvantages; as in a Convent of Friars, or
 “ a Royal or National Academy, there would be
 “ always existing a sufficient number of men in
 “ health and vigour to employ their care and
 “ attention upon this common interest. The
 “ endeavour of obtaining for the Academy and
 “ and for the Nation this great *Desideratum* of a
 “ Public

“ *Public Collection*, has for so many years been
 “ uppermost in my mind, that it may possibly
 “ run away with me, and carry me further than
 “ propriety and the occasions require. Relying
 “ on your indulgently accepting this excuse, I
 “ shall conclude my observations on the theory
 “ and practice of Colouring, with, &c.”

This national collection of all the materials of art, is absolutely necessary for the formation of the pupils and of the public (who ought to grow up with them), whatever style of art may be likely to obtain a settled credit, so as to be considered as constituting the national taste, whether we may content ourselves with adopting the manly plan of art pursued by the Carraches, and their school of Bologna, in uniting the perfections of all the other schools, of which there remains a masterly, elegant record, in a beautiful little poem of Agostino,* or whether
 (which

* SONETTO in lode di NICOLO BOLOGNESE.

Chi farsi un bon pittor cerca, e desia
 Il disegno di Roma habbia all' mano
 La mossa, coll' ombrar Veneziano,
 E il degno colorir di Lombardia,
 Di Michel' Angiol la terribil via,
 Il vero natural di Titiano,
 Del Correggio lo stil puro, e sovrano,
 E di un Rafel la giusta simetria;
 Del Tibaldi il decoro, e il fondamento;
 Del dotto Primaticcio l'inventare,
 E un po' di gratia del Parmigianino.
 Ma senza tanti studie, e tanto stento,
 Si ponga solo l'opre ad imitare,
 Che qui lascioci il nostro Nicolino.

AGOSTINO CARRACCI.

(which I rather hope) we look further into that most essential article, the style of design, and endeavour to form it altogether in conformity with the taste of the Greeks, in which Annibal made such an illustrious beginning on his coming to Rome, as may be seen in many parts of the Farnese Gallery. Whichever of these plans of art the nation might fix in, the materials necessary towards succeeding can only be found in the collection which it has been the main object of this letter to obtain: there and there only, shall we be enabled to find that which can qualify us to succeed, when used with genius, and superinduced upon our own (never to be lost sight of) studies after nature. The further prosecution of this plan of Annibal in uniting this Grecian style of design to the other necessary essentials of a picture, was certainly the great *desideratum* of art; and though it has never since been absolutely out of view, and sometimes incidentally occurred in conversation and written speculations, yet it was but little employed in practice, either by the Italians or French, as I have had ample occasion to take the liberty of remarking in my inquiry into the real and imaginary obstructions to the acquisition of the arts in England, the greatest part of which was written whilst I was abroad upon the spot, and which I published in 1775, very shortly after my return. My idea of
writing

writing on that subject arose from the ill-founded, scurrilous aspersions of the climate, genius, and capacity of the people of our islands, which made part of a history of the art, written by the Abbé Wincleman, and (whilst I was at Rome) was much read and talked of, to the great annoyance of our little colony, at the English Coffee-house. I soon found, on enquiring into the subject, that Wincleman was, in this abuse, only a gleaner after two illustrious Frenchmen, who began the attack some years before, and maintained it in a manner very ill according, and altogether unworthy, the liberal abilities and fine genius which were so apparent in all the other parts of what they had written. The detection of the sophism, or the mistake upon which their discourteous, uncivil body of reasoning was founded, lay so peculiarly in the way of an artist of information, that I saw myself in possession of an advantaged ground, which would fortunately bring even me to a level with those great characters; and accordingly, in that enquiry above mentioned, I have added to the arguments of Abbé Wincleman, those of the President Montesquieu, and of the Abbé du Bos, and have offered the best detection and refutation of them in my power; and which I had then good reason to hope, and have long since had the satisfaction to find, was sufficient and ample apology for the climate of
our

our islands, for the characteristic qualities of the genius of our people, and for the removal of that ungracious, mischievous stigma, which they endeavoured to fix upon the efforts of our native artists, already so much and vexatiously oppressed by a variety of other causes. The nature of the subject I had undertaken, obliged me in the course of that enquiry frequently to remark, that the arts in Italy and France had gradually declined into imitations of the lower species of excellence, which, even when obtained, could not bring much credit, although it must be confessed that great genius and ability had unfortunately been wasted in the pursuit: and be it said without offence, that the followers of Cortona, Conca, Ricci, Jordano, Le Moine, Boucher, Pierre, and even Carlo Vanloo, could not be expected to arrive at any great things. However, if good is transitory, and passes away from us, so does evil: and it is with a heart-felt pleasure I find myself now enabled to interrupt this censure, as, according to all the late accounts of the state of arts in France, a higher and a much better order of things has been recently substituted in the place of their former corruptions; and the sublime, venerable, majestic, genuine simplicity of the Grecian taste, utterly estranged from all mean affectation, from the *précieuse* or the grimace and blustering, and incorporated with all that
might

might be derived from the illustrious moderns towards forming a complete and perfect totality, is now renovated, or indeed rather created, and for the first time brought into existence in that country : since it is certain that, on the one hand, Annibal Caracci, and Domenichino, had but made a beginning, and did not go far enough in the gusto of Grecian design ; and on the other hand, that (every thing fairly considered and acknowledged), from all that remains of the ancient painting, it is highly probable that even the works of their best painters were very defective in some essential parts of the art, where many of the illustrious moderns have left us nothing to wish for. With hands lift up to heaven, and a heart full of exultation, I then hail the generous exertion of David and his noble fellow-labourers in that glorious undertaking, wishing it a long and a prosperous carriere. How happy am I to think, that they have a public who will meet their work with correspondent feelings, who will give it the same generous, becoming patriotic reception, which has ever so peculiarly and so exemplarily characterised that gallant nation ! As this new style of painting, founded upon the Grecian character of design, is of such recent introduction in France, is so utterly the reverse of every pursuit of art that was in use with them in my time, it would be a great satisfaction (to me at least

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least

least an exceeding great one) to know by what artist this revolution in the style of design was first introduced; in what picture it was first shewn; when, where, and whether the first suggestion of the idea of this revolution in the taste of art, had no other circumstance connected with it, than the general spirit of reform, and the desire of preparing and adapting art to the purity and feelings of those descendants of Brutus, Dion, and Cato, who would be likely to come forward in the cause of the public and of virtue. The British artists on this side of the Channel are naturally anxious observers of what is doing by their brethren on the other side. We have long been endeavouring to have the glory of rivalling and winning from them the palm of victory; and in many instances we have greatly profited by that endeavour. They would themselves have great satisfaction in what we could shew them of our Reynolds, Wilson, Barret, and some others, who in their several departments will perhaps with difficulty be outdone. We feel disposed to dispute and contend with our brethren in France, just as they do with each other, by every generous effort to excel, and distinguish ourselves for rendering superior services to the art, and to the public, without in the least detracting from that candour, esteem, and fraternal respect and affection which ought, and I hope will, ever result from the congeniality

geniality of our feelings and pursuit. The grand style of art now pursuing in France does high honour to their choice who adopted it; and as my attention has been so long turned that way, as to give me a clear view of its value, I sincerely hope they will now, in the close of the eighteenth century, and with the glorious collection of pictures which gives such brilliancy to the Louvre, be able wisely to keep the right channel between the Scylla and Charybdis on either side. The Statuino manner, the dry, miserable, bald poverty, resulting from such an over-scrupulous attention, as even to imitate the very imperfections which attach from the nature of the materials, or of the want of science in many of the Greek basso-relievos, may possibly be as wide of the true mark, as if no attention had be paid to those antiques; although, to the unskilful, who are not of the art, such work might, from its conformity with certain inevitable defects in all imitations with such a material as marble, and with the imperfect state of the science in the ancient bas-reliefs, appear more Grecian than the truer and better style, which with a wise and just licence, and adoption of completer science, might be formed out of the same admirable materials. Poussin has made an excellent use of the antiques; but it might still be carried further, and of a higher zest, particularly in large works. The superior energy

and animation of Rafaele may be as compatible with the most refined Greek forms as with any other. The style and perfections of Laocoon might be blended with the fine picturesque ingredients of the manner of Rubens, Vandyk, Paul Veronese, or Rembrandt, not only without injury, but with much, nay infinite advantage; the form of the Laocoon would then be at home, accompanied with what naturally belongs to it. This would be art indeed; and from my soul I wish the French artists success in the pursuit, and that their men of genius may never know the vexation of having their hands brutally tied up from it by influence, combination, cabal, or curse of any kind. Nothing can exceed the mortification of being only enabled to speak or to scribble about that which one feels an eagerness and a capacity for executing in another and a much more effectual way.

This sublime union of all the great qualities of art was the last undertaking necessary towards its completion. Contracted to a point at the outset, a mere embryo and gross imperfect resemblance of the general form of objects, it required a long tract of time, and ingenious, various and great labour in developing, discriminating, and working up the component parts of this mass. Looking back, for a moment, upon this early progressional state of things, one cannot help remarking, and it is for

for the interest of mankind to remark such a fact, that the whole entire growth of art is peculiarly and exclusively to be ascribed to the laborious, generous, successful culture of the citizens of the little Republic of Florence. Malvasia, and the other writers of the different schools of art in Italy, may contend for the mere barren fact of having painters at the same time, and equally unformed with Cimabue, Giotto, or such like ; but they cannot pretend that the people under any other government in Italy had been able to raise the arts out of this state of general barbarism, until they were taught it by imitating and forming themselves upon the successful labours of that carriere which commenced at Florence with Brunelleschi, Massaccio, Ghiberti and Donato, and finished almost a century after with Lippi, Da Vinci, Fra. Bartolomeo, and Michael Angelo. But little could have been expected at Rome in that time, as the Popes newly returned from their exile at Avignon had ample employment in establishing their government ; a circumstance the most fortunate for art, as by that means space was left in that capital of the world, for the reception of that art which the Republic of Florence had fostered and reared up to maturity, and which, from this very circumstance had, by so filling their churches and palaces with the productions of the several necessary stages of this progress, left them

little or no space remaining for the enjoyment of any specimens of what they had thus brought to its mature perfection. Happily, Divine Providence seems to have kept Rome in reserve, as a magnificent theatre for the exhibition of this grand spectacle of intellectual entertainment, from whence it should soon be communicated to the rest of Europe.

Would to Heaven that some great and good man, possessed of the eloquence of a Burke, a Rousseau, a Bossuet, or a Fenelon, should in this momentous crisis of Revolutions (when the happiness or misery of ages is pending upon the issue), come nobly forward, at any risk, as the blessed advocate for that constitution of things which is likely to be most productive of that happiness which results from intellectual, virtuous culture, and from those ingenious arts which constitute the very pabulum and nutriment of this virtue and culture of the intellect! The vindictive, tempestuous passions of our nature will be always sure to make ample provision for occasions of strife, for military establishments, and consequently for those modes of government which are best adapted to such views: although this is, perhaps, inevitable for the most part; yet one might hope there would be always found magnanimity enough in human nature to permit, as the Greeks had so gloriously, and for such a long time, permitted, a sacred territory

territory apart governed by its own pacific laws, which were respected by all contending parties. There is nothing in all the Grecian story which can exhibit that very belligerent people in a more graceful, amiable, and becoming point of view, than their admirable, salutary, exemplary conduct in this particular : and yet, what could any man say of the sacred territory of Elis, that might not be affirmed (with many additional arguments of inexpressible advantage) of the Papal government at Rome ? How easy would it be, without rashly destroying it, to weed out discreetly and prudently any of those defects and abuses which might attach from length of time, and from the very excusable infirmity ever inseparable from human nature in all conceivable situations and concerns ! How easy, without loss of its dignity, to accommodate it to any existing circumstance ! But there will be no need to wish for the eloquence of a great man, on an occasion so deeply interesting to humanity : the French are a wise and a great people, who have been long distinguished by their predilection for those arts which humanize, and are not likely to forego any occasions of practising their usual magnanimity. The Papal government cannot want persuasive advocates among a people so happily enlightened : and as for any republics that might grow up in Italy, they will be so well acquainted with the value of the Papal government, as to

make every effort for preserving it in a flourishing state. The infinite importance of such a government as the Papal to the arts which humanize society, has been long an object of my deepest meditation; and I have before had occasion, in my printed letter to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, from the 24th to the 32d page, to touch a little upon the great and essential advantages derived to Europe from its connexion with the Papal government; and as it is impossible to reflect upon the growth and advancement of those arts which tend to meliorate and humanize society, without recurring to the same venerable source, I have, in the introductory Lecture to my Course in the Academy, been also led to take notice of a few particulars which, as they will come in very well here, I shall transcribe, without caring much whether it be digressing or not.

It is curious to reflect, that the exertions of art seem to arise from the disappointment of the human mind, sated, disgusted, and tired with the monotony of the real persons and things which this world affords, so full of imperfection, and accompanied with so much misery, strife, and injustice. In proportion to the serenity and goodness of the mind, it naturally turns away from such a state of things, in search of some other, more grateful and consoling; and it has a natural horror of those atheistical cavils which would malignantly deprive it of all

all other resource, by mercilessly chaining it down to the scene before it. Hence it arises that the minds of men, in all ages and places, where they were at leisure, and happily relieved from the oppressions of war, tyrannies, and all their horrid train of consequent miseries, have naturally dilated and found consolation in the objects of religion, which they would anticipate and realize by their endeavours to cut or carve them in blocks of wood or stone, which, whether detached from their parent rocks, and set up in high and honoured places of frequent resort, or, as was probably the more ancient way, cut into and making part of immense excavations, as is seen in the mountains of India. Whether the subject matter of religion be well or ill reasoned upon in these detailed efforts ; whether it be taken from the various incarnations of the Indian Vishnou, from the more elegant ideas and forms of the Greek Mythology, or from the more consoling, just, and happily adapted matter resulting from the more equitable rational hopes and fears inculcated by the Christian religion ; yet the whole taken together forms an astonishing chain of the most indubitable proof of the extreme thirst of the mind for a more satisfactory state of things, and of its natural recurrence to the arts of design, as the first, the universal and most natural written language, which, in furnishing the means of expressing this universal testimony, affords
a happy

a happy and the only opportunity of tracing human nature through an immense tract of ages ; through India, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. And although whatever was not connected with the religion of those people, was not thought of as worthy the commemorating, yet many other matters and usages are luckily preserved by their incidental connexion with this superior matter, which otherwise would now be utterly lost to us : and, every thing fairly and fully considered, what should we have known of the ancient nations, their arts and knowledges, were it not for the stimulus which religion afforded to the human exertions ? What other motives ever did or could supply its place ?

The deplorable calamities of wars, rapine, and every misery which for many centuries deluged Italy, during the ambitious contests of rival Emperors, elected by the different legions and bands of soldiery ; the incursions of the northern barbarians, who destroyed those Emperors, and divided the spoil of the country ; and the struggles of these with the succeeding inundations of other northern hordes, equally savage ; their long contests in the aggregate masses, and afterwards in the no less mischievous fragments into which they were frittered, left the mind no leisure, but wholly occupied it in contriving for the necessary security of mere bodily existence. However, though late, this fermentation did at last, more or less, subside into settled

settled governments ; and the embers of the arts of design, and indeed of all other arts and knowledges, which had been providentially kept alive by the (poor and ever to be esteemed) monks of the Greek and Latin churches, were again kindled into a flame, by a people who at last felt themselves at ease, and in a condition to cultivate intellectual enjoyments : and therefore, in the 13th century, John Cimabue, the disciple of a Greek Mosaic painter at Florence, was the glorious instrument of the resurrection of the arts of design in Italy, which a happy combination of moral causes had greatly contributed to advance and to perfect. The Christian religion, which happily was then universally established, opened a new and a large field for the exercise of the arts, in order to provide pictures and statues for their churches, as necessary helps and furtherances to piety ; serving at once as books, intelligible to the unlettered, and for memorials to assist the recollection and give a fervour to the hearts of those who were better informed. And whenever the works of art have not answered these purposes, it is an abuse to which every, even the best things, are liable, as the fault lies not in the art, but in the artist, or in the employer, who suffers, or rather more frequently conditions for, and encourages the abuse.

From what has been observed respecting the Egyptians, it is very apparent that nothing can be
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a greater bar and impediment to the advancement and dignified exertion of art, than a contracted, mean, grovelling disposition in the artist, whether it arises from the political debasement of the rank he fills in society, or from his own fordid, contemptible election ; as under either of these states men are deprived of the necessary advantages of education, and cannot give the reins to that noble heroic spirit which is the true foundation of original expansive ability and personal worth. But, under the Christian dispensation, the successors of Cimabue were fortunately annoyed by no influences obstructive to their advancement. Christianity had so elucidated that question concerning the natural rights and legal equality of mankind, as to make the sullen spirit of despotism or absolute tyranny utterly inconsistent with all its governments, of whatever form ; and even the philosophy of Socrates (so creative of exalted worth and ability among the Grecians) was not more generous or further removed from narrow unproductive selfishness, than the rigid self-denial, philanthropy, beneficence, and unceasing intellectual culture, which Christianity so pressingly recommends. Christianity is indeed the perfection of the Socratic doctrines, with elucidations and motives for the performance of them of which Socrates had no knowledge. These are the great and only sources of all admirable, sublime exertions ; and therefore, if
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the Italians have not carried some parts of the art to as high a pitch of perfection as the Grecians, other causes, sufficiently obvious, will fully account for it, without our foolishly supposing that religion prevented it; and, notwithstanding what Shaftesbury, Webb, or other late writers, have unwisely, peevishly, insinuated to the contrary, yet assuredly Christianity is far from being hostile to genius; and there have been too many noble monuments of Christian art executed within the three last centuries, for us to entertain the least doubt of the compatibility of our religion with the highest flights of imagination. If we be but sufficiently grounded in other matters, in science and general education, the materials of Christianity are capable of any thing. Phidias, Parhasius, and Apelles, knew nothing which in our situation they might not employ with success.

Notwithstanding the inevitable jarrings from the varieties of men's dispositions, interests, and circumstances, yet it is a well known and a true maxim, That in all Republics or constitutions of society, according to whatever way the citizens are reared up, so they shall be found to be.—But, without entering upon abstract reasonings, on all the possible advantages that science and art might fairly derive from the doctrines of Christianity, from the suppression of barren selfishness, and fraternal equality, and the intellectual culture which, upon
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a just statement, will be found to form the tissue and the very essence of Christianity, we may even content ourselves with the mere matter of fact, as exhibited in the Papal Government at Rome; and there it has been abundantly apparent, that the time, the attention, and the wealth employed for the public in the culture of those arts and intellectual accomplishments which elevate human nature to its real dignity, above mere sensual and brutal existence, forms an æra in the history of mankind, not less new than admirable and amiable, more especially if we compare this pacific scene of intellectual exertion with the horrors and carnage of preceding military Governments of brutal force, under the pompous titles of Roman Commonwealth or Roman Empire, which for so many ages had deluged or disgraced the world. The name of Civil Society was, is, and ever will be, ill bestowed upon such hordes and combinations of robbers and assassins.

Neither our time nor the subject we have in hand will allow us to go far in our remarks on this Pontifical Republic at Rome, this universal treasury and theatre for the culture and support of the education of Europe, where, throwing aside all privilege of rank, and claims of family, and primogeniture, every thing was devoted to the general promotion of intellect. All its honours and rewards, its mitres, purple hats, and tiara, accessible to all,

to every condition, where superior worth and ability could be found, diffused such a spirit throughout Europe, as was best calculated to wrestle with the brutal ferocity of the dark Gothic ages, and, sooner or later, could not fail of being attended with the most extensive salutary effects. Their ascendancy and power derived from intellect : whatever could be gained in this way, was from the state of celibacy to which they had reduced themselves, necessarily dispensed in the way best calculated to furnish the means and increase to this ascendancy, and consequently in a manner most profitable to the world. It is to no purpose to cavil at those abuses which, from the frailty of man, will sometimes accompany the uses of the best things. We all know that the worst conceivable things are the abuses of the best ; and we may therefore fairly and justly give them full credit for the early nurture, cultivation, and, I had almost said, mature and vigorous perfection of whatever we have most reason to value ourselves for, either as compared to the animals beneath us, or to the rest of our own species, scattered over the other parts of the globe. With respect to those arts which principally form the object of attention in this Academy, however pleasing it may be to reflect on the different monuments of their culture, in the churches and convents of the several countries of Europe ; yet it was at Rome where all this intellectual influence concentrated ;

trated ; it was there that the mind was astonished, delighted, and enabled to contemplate with rapture, the sublimities to which art had arrived : and it will not be from our purpose to close these observations with remarking, that even in the hereditary aristocracy at Venice, where the profession of arts and letters were foolishly considered as beneath the nobles, the commonalty intimidated at an awful distance, and consequently destitute of the necessary ambition of excelling, and there being no third estate, its effects in the arts may be seen accordingly ; for whilst the human mind made the noblest excursions in the Vatican and Capella Sistina, under the auspices of the Roman Pontiffs, the genius of the Venetians was cultivating the mechanical branches of art, the colouring and chiaro-scuro, which Giorgione had imported from L. da Vinci, the Florentine.

Art has never flourished as a useless foppery and appendage to luxury ; quite the reverse : worthlessness, imbecility, and destruction, have always been the consequence of its passing into that state ; and the vulgar error of supposing otherways, can only have arisen from inattention, want of feeling, and the absurdity, not to say mean adulation, of magnifying its accidental casual connexion with patronage, into something staminal and essential to its growth and perfection. No, no, base time-servers ! it may answer your sinister views to say so,
but

but nothing can be more irreconcilable with fact. Art appeared in Greece and Italy with so much splendor, only because the public of Greece and Italy had the feeling, wisdom, and love of virtue, to discover the peculiar extension and facility of its application to purposes the most interesting and valuable. It was then as a matter of public utility and interest, that the churches and convents of Italy, (which may be considered as powerful citizens of a great republic, completely independent, and so uninfluenced by each other, as to admit of the most liberal, generous a rivalry,) by their collision, happily afforded for advancing and perfecting art, a mass of continued employment, the most steady, uninterrupted, extensive, and stimulating, the world had ever known. In fashionable language, this mass of employment, this commerce of mutual considerations and advantages has been called patronage; a term the most impertinent and ill-applied, as is abundantly evident in the history of art, where unhappily we too often find its vigour and growth stunted and liable to blight when the great and their patronage came unluckily to interfere and tamper with it.

As I have in another place* had occasion to touch a little upon an instance or two of domestic mis-

* See the observations on Sir Joshua Reynolds, at the end, and from page 77 to 85, of my Letter to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c. printed in 1793.

misfortune in the way of patronage, I shall go on to something of more importance, though less likely to give offence, as the parties are all long since removed from this scene of strife, and sometimes of oppression: and although I cannot spare the time for the polishing and labour necessary to fit these observations for the public view, yet they must not be thrown away; and as they regard very illustrious personages, and very important events, I must at least find the time to fling them out as they occur to me, and rely for my excuse upon the candour and indulgence of the Dilettanti Society, and of the public. The life of Lionardo da Vinci furnishes abundant illustration of all that we have been observing, and to a degree so mischievous and destructive, that there are no words of weight and magnitude sufficient to satisfy me in speaking of it. This (I was going to say more than man) Vinci appears to have been about three years older than the celebrated Magnifico Lorenzo de Medicis, and lived, or rather lounged away at Florence and under his eye, the forty-four years of the life of this Magnifico, possibly without notice, but certainly without any opportunity afforded him for the exercise of his talents; and when in 1494, two years after the death of the Magnifico, Lionardo, for the first time, quitted Florence, upon the invitation of Duke Sforza, at Milan, and it appears, accord-

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ing to the account in Vasari: that he, to give it in his own words, “ *Fu condotto à Milano con gran*
 “ *reputatione Lionardo al Duca, il quale molto si*
 “ *dilettava del suono della lira, perchè sonasse, e*
 “ *Lionardo porto quello stromento, ch’ egli aveva*
 “ *di sua mano fabricato d’argento gran parte, in*
 “ *forma d’un teschio di cavallo, cosa bizzarra, e*
 “ *nuova, accioche l’armonia fosse con maggior tuba,*
 “ *e piu sonora di voce, laonde superò tutti i musici,*
 “ *che quivi erano concorsi à sonare. Oltra ciò fu il*
 “ *migliore dicitore di rime all’ improvviso del tempo*
 “ *suo. Sentendo il Duca i ragionamenti tanto mi-*
 “ *rabili di Lionardo, talmente s’innamorò delle sue*
 “ *virtu, ch’era cosa incredibile.*” Here it appears,
 that even Lionardo, with all his abilities, as the
 creator or discoverer of all those several perfections
 that have ennobled modern art, and that, even
 though disjoined and broken by his successors,
 have given the glorious characteristic to their
 several schools. Rafaele at Rome, with one
 part, M. Angelo with another, and Giorgione,
 Titian, Fra. Bartolomeo, and Correggio, with the
 remaining fragments. Yet, with all this, his own
 peculiarly so, and united and incorporated into
 the same mass, under his sagacious hands, it not-
 withstanding appears, that the principal inducement
 for inviting him to Milan was of quite another
 kind, viz. to play on his curious silver lyre, to
 declaim and sing extempore verses; and out of

the mere accident of this concurrence of qualities in the same person, arose the subordinate secondary consideration of giving him some employment as a painter. After Sforza's death, and the breaking up of the academy at Milan, in the management of which, as well as in the aqueduct business, Lionardo must have wasted much time: we find him again at Florence, when that town had, by driving out the Medici, recovered its *liberty*, and then, for the first time, Lionardo was employed (by the Chief Magistrate and Senate) in the public work of the famous Battle for the Standard, the cartoon of which he executed in the Town-Hall, in concurrence with the other celebrated work of M. Angelo; and afterwards upon the return of the Medici to Florence, we find Lionardo quitted that place, and went to Rome, offering his services to Leo X. the younger son of the Magnifico, his old, useless, unfeeling, looker-on; and we find him so mortifyingly received at Rome, that he shortly afterwards quitted, not only Rome but Italy, and threw himself into the arms of strangers, where he laid down a life of anxiety and vexations, resulting from the consciousness of talents that had been almost unemployed, never in the extent to which they were adequate; and, to crown all, with the addition of knowing that his rivals, or more properly, his imitators and
followers,

followers, had the good fortune of enjoying an ample field for exercising those shreds of ability they had borrowed from him. The prospect sickens me; I cannot go on. Were we to enquire, why so shocking a waste, and of such capabilities, should have been permitted in the wise designs of all governing Providence, I know of no other answer likely to occur, but that this matter was thus harshly, forcibly, and glaringly held out as a beacon or great light, compassionately discovering the delusions of patronage and its sinister politics, the better to excite the horror and execration of all succeeding generations. Let me, however, make my acknowledgments here, which I do with every recognition and congratulation, to Mr. Roscoe, for the great pleasure I have received in reading his very admirable, manly work of the life of this (I must, after all, call him our) Magnifico; as it is well shewn, and in a manner that does honour both to the head and heart of Mr. Roscoe, that the great Lorenzo possessed so much, and such great excellence, that I cannot possibly refuse to honour his name with respect and veneration. Indeed, every man's experience has but too often shewn, with how much unhappy facility great men, deeply engaged in the furthering of one pursuit, are liable to overlook excellence, however transcendent, when it lies out of the vortex of their own enquiries. Besides, as the Magnifico could have

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been of no other use to the Artist, than to furnish a field for the exercise of talents, in which he could have no part but as a patron, he might be easily inclined to turn his attention another way, in which himself could be more an actor: and it is not an uncommon thing, at this day, to see great men engaged in similar pursuits, of antiquities, books, and medals (though in an inferior degree to Lorenzo,) who find (unhappily for their country and for art) more satisfaction in fostering and endeavouring to instruct, and to rear up young artists, than in contriving to find employment for those whose talents are formed, and with an industry that had been better spared, thus perversely multiply, and successively perpetuate, that which is never to be used, and indeed never has been used, but by men of a very different and a much nobler character, who can bear to see grand exertions without sickening at the prospect. Was there no great man at Florence who could endure the splendor and transcendancy of Vinci's abilities; or did the Magnifico prevent it? How many medalists, little gem cutters, and such like, had the ear of the Magnifico? and could he have been so absurd as to estimate Vinci only from their reports of him? Impossible! he must have known better! there must have been something rotten and bad at heart in the Magnifico, and indeed in all that species of character: they only want a cloak to conceal
their

their envy, and they can easily find it at all times. However, out of compliment to Mr. Roscoe, I will suppose otherwise, and that it is from the mere pre-occupation of little inferior artists, that these patrons, these Magnifico's are generally so ill-directed in all times, and has more than any thing else contributed to obstruct and to prevent the public from deriving that satisfaction and benefit which would result from the unrestrained, glorious exertions of great artists. They are much mistaken who would suppose that art can derive any advantage from the circumstance of seeing artists much in the familiarity, or at the tables of the great. Not to speak of the pimps and buffoons upon whom these favors are usually lavished in corrupt times: yet, at the best, the great seldom think of arts, but merely, *pour délasser*, as an amusing relaxation from serious pursuits, and generally find it much pleasanter, more grateful to self-importance, to have those about them to whom they can communicate ideas and teach, rather than run the danger of being themselves taught, how the arts might be employed to some grand purpose in the service of the community. Such a man as Vinci could not answer half so well to laugh at, or to play the under part of adulation, in receiving the luminous hints which flash from the heads of these *Mecenati*, as a more inferior trifling artist: and I believe in

general it will be found true, that great artists, and their cognate ideas and intentions of great public service, have but seldom received benefit or assistance from any individual of very shining talents. I say individual; for it may be different when that individual acts in community, as in a Society like that for the Encouragement of Arts, that of the Dilettanti and such like, or when such individual acts subordinately as a trustee, which was the case of Mecænas and Colbert. It is only the men of plain, useful, good sense, with hearts strongly biased to integrity and the public service, like Mr. Tooke, of the Temple, that will ever think of the liberality of raising a fence for the security of a man of genius and abilities, persecuted and driven from one profession to another, like Mr. John Horne; and, as the world is at no time without good men, it is much to be regretted that such a character as Vinci had not found out, or was not found, by some good citizen, like Mr. Tooke. The glory that would have infallibly followed his name, annexed to that of Vinci, would have been well and honestly purchased by that essential service to the art, and to the public, which such timely assistance would have enabled Vinci to perform.

I have been sometimes almost of opinion, that the overmuch attention to intaglio's, cameo's, bronzes, manuscripts, and other antiquities, is
likely

likely to be often attended with mischievous consequences, more especially in princes and great men : their minds will be contracted and narrowed by such studies, which cannot fail to make them like little artists, so filled with the vanity, self-importance, and rarity of their own acquisitions, as that they seldom or never are of any use in furthering great men, or great, original, national works : indeed their hostility is more to be feared, than their support is to be expected. These studies are of admirable use to an artist who can make them subservient to his grand views with respect to modern original compositions in painting and sculpture. And, so far as the expending large sums in collecting and making museums, filled with those antiques for the study of the public, both artists and cognoscenti, the Medici family, and other great collectors, have been useful to art and great artists. But I believe it will be found, on mature candid examination, that the utility of those great collectors goes no further. These reflections can by no means apply to the collections of such gentlemen as Mr. Townley, or the late Dr. Hunter, the overplus of whose limited fortunes could not be more wisely, desirably, or usefully employed, than when solely and exclusively thus applied in the service of the public, more especially when we recollect their manly, patriotic disposition ; and a few others of similar character that might be mentioned,

mentioned, equally zealous and ardent for the success of all enterprizes that might add to the reputation of national art, I shall never forget the satisfaction I received when in company with Messrs. Townley, Knight, Windham, Wilbraham, and I believe Mr. Peechy: the late Mr. Wedgwood, on shewing us his copy of the famous antique large cameo vase, together with the original, informed us, that when the Duke of Portland favoured him with the loan of this so very deservedly celebrated antique, his Grace added, that nothing could give him more pleasure than to see some native who was able to do a similar work of more excellence. Such truly noble patriotic characters as these will always stand as exceptions to our observation above stated, and do not interfere with its application as generally true; we may then go on with stating, that the great personages who are likely to employ great artists in works of much consequence, are men of a very different character from those of the Medici; such as Pope Julius the Second, Agostino Ghigi, the merchant, Cardinal Farnese, and, above all, those who administer for the churches and convents. The famous works of the Vatican, and the Sistine Chapel, by Rafaele and M. Angelo, were both begun by Julius the Second, of the family of Rovere, to whom we ought to give the whole credit of the patronage (if it is to be so called); and, shocking to think, but it also appears, that even

M. Angelo,

M. Angelo, though reared up by Lorenzo de Medici, with his children Peter, John, and Julian, lounged away (as Condivi complains) many years without work; and the employment which Leo the Tenth gave him, or rather forced upon him, was puzzled, insidious, and eventually proved of the most excruciating and vexatious kind; and the tears with which poor Michael set out for Florence, where the commission lay, were ominous, and almost instinctive presages of the destruction of so much of his time in contriving roads for the quarries of Seravezza, and in all the other miserable, contemptible attentions in which he was employed during the life of Leo the Tenth, and thus withheld and prevented from finishing his grand work of the monument for Julius the Second, where all his abilities as a sculptor would have concentrated. Let any man only put together in his imagination the celebrated Moses at St. Pietro in Vincoli, and the thirty-nine other statues with the bas-relievos, and he may well conclude with Vefari, that it would have been “ *ottimo testimonio della virtù di Michelagnolo, che di bellezza, e di superbia, e di grande ornamento e ricchezza di statue passava ogni antica, et Imperiale sepoltura.*” During the papacy of Adriano, the successor of Leo the Tenth, all patronage of the arts was withdrawn, and M. Angelo happily left to carry on his Caput Opera, this monument for Julius; but unfortunately

Adrian's

Adrian's reign was short, and, on the coming in of Clement VII. another of this blessed family of the Medici, M. Angelo was again torn from his monument, never to go to it any more, and obliged to employ himself upon matters of (comparitively speaking) infinitely less importance in the Capella Laurentiana. We may add to this, by way of finishing, that the only employment of Rafaele, that originated in Leo the Tenth, seems to have been the Cartoons, or designs for the tapestries, which, at the expence of 50,000 scudi d'oro, were executed in Flanders, and brought from thence to Rome, according to Panvinio, by Leo, for ornamenting the pontifical apartments, whilst the admirable original cartoons, from whence this trash of the tapestries were copied, were left at the manufactory in Flanders, neglected as things of little value, to be (fortunately for us) purchased by the Parliament of Great Britain for 7 or 10,000*l*. (I forget which) almost a century afterwards.

But to come home; we have, however, some great characters, with minds of an admirable expansion and catholicity, so as to embrace the whole concerns of art, ancient as well as modern, domestic as well as foreign; who, superior to all sinister motives, can, whilst they find delight in sowing for the next generation, enjoy, and find a superior satisfaction, in endeavouring to persuade,
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and to enable the public to reap and apply to immediate use, whatever harvest of cotemporary abilities the good providence of God had placed within their reach. Such a man was Mr. Edmund Burke : his means, indeed, would not allow him to enter far upon those expensive exertions which might attract much public notice ; but as far as ardent patriotic inclination and information, the most extensive and happily selected, could be united in the same person, they were united in him ; he was the completest specimen of that kind I have ever met with : this was well known to his friends, Athenian Stewart, to Sir Joshua, to myself, and others, and might have been well expected from the author of those admirable tracts with which he began his career of life. And however others might think, they will, I hope, allow me to regret that he had ever been diverted from this track to the pursuit of politics, in a scene where matters had been so embroiled by inveterate usages, of long standing, that it was impossible for him, or any one else, to do much good. Of this truth he has himself, after some years experience, and when it was too late to retreat, left an admirable record in his "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents," printed by Doddsley, in 1770. This book he gave me himself ; and, by the unusually formal, significant manner in which he gave it, I have often thought since, that he wished, and
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meant me to read and consider, with due attention, the opinion (which to the great shame of the time) he had formed of his own hopes and prospects, and how little reason I should have to expect him to be my stickler in any difference that might arise (and which he saw rising) between me and Sir Joshua, to whom, as he often told me (and as has since appeared to the public by Sir Joshua's will), he was under very considerable pecuniary obligations, and even at the time that he was himself obliging me in a similar way. Had I then rightly considered the matter, or had he ventured to be a little more explicit, my precipitate estrangement could not have taken place. But his acquaintance with Sir Joshua Reynolds was of longer standing than his acquaintance with me ; I was a continued trouble and expence to him, and I could no longer bear the thought of continuing to render his house unpleasant by my frequent bickerings with Sir Joshua, who, to say the truth, acted somewhat weakly with respect to me ; and, on the other side, I was myself much to blame with respect to him : my notions of candour and liberality between artists who were friends, were too juvenile, and romantically strained too high for human frailty in the general occurrences of life. Disappointed in not finding more in poor Sir Joshua, I was not then in a humour to make a just estimate of the many excellent qualities I might have

have really found in him. But there is nothing rightly appreciated without that comparison with other things of the same nature, which time and long experience only can enable us to make. I have, however, some consolation in reflecting that, for the last two years of his life, we were both so sensible of our mutual mistakes, as to admit the renewal of a friendly intercourse, which will ever be grateful to my recollection. Perhaps, nay, indeed, I now believe, that every thing has been providentially ordered for the best. My exertions have necessarily been more vigorous and more variegated, in the insulated state which this difference with Sir Joshua occasioned, than they would have been in any other. This is the *desideratum* of existence; and happily, although I quitted, and somewhat harshly, the nest Mr. Burke's kindness and friendship afforded me, yet it was not before I was in a condition to fly and provide for myself. But Mr. Burke, my first friend, is now gone! the peace of God be for ever with him! and, notwithstanding the whirlwind of politics, in which (to the great injury of Art) the public attention has been so long, and is still so deeply engaged, there is still, thank God, yet remaining, and I hope with unabated ardour, a Society of Dilettanti, a Society for the Encouragement of Arts, and some others, interested in whatever is for the reputation and real honour of the nation;

nation ; and it may be looked for, from the high information of the age, that a little time, experience, and true patriotifm, will add to their number.

But to come back to Lionardo, and to the family of the Medici.—Had fuch a man as the Magnifico fortunately beftowed no attention on art, and employed, or, to ufe the vulgar phrafe, encouraged no artift whatever, he could have been then chargeable with only an act of omiffion ; but he never could have countenanced, encouraged, employed, or recommended any painter, during his whole life, without hoftility and injury, not only to the feelings and reputation of Lionardo da Vinci, but alfo to the art, to his country, and to fucceeding generations. Such great men as the Magnifico, with all conceivable influence in their hands, cannot build or raife up any thing, without endeavouring to deftroy and level with the duft whatever ftands in the way of their intentions : the one prefupposes the other. I have been fometimes tempted to think, that this neglect of Vinci by the Magnifico, and his fon Leo the Tenth, arofe from fomething too myfterious and enveloped with fecrecy and darknefs, to have made its way to our knowledge. Can it be that the Magnifico envied him, as Cardinal Richlieu is faid to have envied and endeavoured to injure Corneille ? but then he muft have been politician enough to have provoked
Vinci

Vinci to some act which would continue the quarrel in his family to his son Leo. Or shall we suppose that there was something so nobly becoming a free citizen in Vinci's character, which could not be relished by this family of the Medici, who were subverting the liberties of their country? Something like this supposition will form a good clue to the rightly understanding certain particulars in the life of M. Angelo also, who, though greatly assisted in his education by this Magnifico, was found assisting his fellow citizens in 1526, by employing his skill in fortifying the town against that army with which this Medici family reinstated themselves after their expulsion. How hypocritical, how deep are the disguised politics of ambition, whatever be its object! how ingeniously perplexing is the gordian knot, in which it entangles all the events of history where those great personages take any concern. Good men, like Whitaker of Manchester, may come forward to tear off the mask which had for so long a time successfully concealed the fiend-like character of Elizabeth; but such matters as amount to no more than the merely obstructing the progress and advancement of ingenious arts, and only tyrannizing over the feelings of a Vinci or a Michael Angelo, and preventing the exertion of their talents, had been too often overlooked, or regarded as trifles by the ordinary class of historians, who have generally considered the world as

made for Cæsar, and have but very rarely looked any further than the mere gross matters of force or artifice, the field or the cabinet, by which his power has been maintained or taken from him by some other character more or less formed of the same materials. A good writer might, notwithstanding, gather laurels in this field, as these matters are very differently estimated, not only in the judgment of an Eachus or Rhadamanthus, but also by the good men of all places and times: and the cause of such men as Fenelon, Milton, Newton, Vinci, or Bonarotti, is more or less the cause of every man who endeavours at being useful in his generation, and will sooner or later be recognised accordingly. However, whether any man may or not think it worth his pains to detect these impositions in the history of the arts, I cannot, without disgust, see how Vafari trifles with his readers, in mentioning so frequently the versatility of Lionardo's disposition, his dissatisfaction with his works, his so frequently leaving things unfinished, and so forth. One is shocked to find those flimsy remarks occurring so often in writings upon art and artists. Any man might know, from his own woe-ful experience, that this is often occasioned by the necessity of finding occupation. Then it is that an active genius, debarred from pursuing the darling object of his wishes, is obliged to look out in search of something else; and his energy, though
always

always great, has a desultory, fickle appearance, and seems to want the stability necessary for the completion of a single pursuit; this, perhaps, occasioned Vasari's mistake, if he was mistaken, and if his observation did not proceed from the little policy of making his court to the great, or at least avoiding to state any thing that might give them offence; a practice frequent enough with the makers of books, and is even sometimes attempted to be justified under the soft, ill-applied appellation of the honest, little arts of life; as if omission in certain matters did not constitute worthlessness as well as commission. However, poor Vasari is in general free enough from this meanness, as appears in many ticklish places of his excellent history; and he was, perhaps, only withheld from doing ample justice, in consequence of his partialities for M. Angelo.

No man can rejoice and be more thankful to Providence than I am, for the happy opportunities of exertion that were bestowed on M. Angelo and Rafaele; at the same time one cannot, without great regret, think how the world should have been robbed of the exertions of the original proprietor and fabricator of those admirable principles upon which M. Angelo and Rafaele practised. When we reflect that from the casual, fortuitous separation and combination of circumstances, many artists, and much time must be lost, before

the unique, identical combination of ingredients shall be brought together by accident, which form the character of such a man as Vinci, how profligate then, and horridly foolish, when you have such a man, to make no other use of his time and talents, than to employ him in rearing up others, of whom the success must be always uncertain. If Milton had been always teaching, he probably never would have made such a man as himself, and the *Paradise Lost*, with a long *et cætera*, would never have existed. Great men ought to be employed to the utmost stretch of their abilities ; they ought to have repeated opportunities of improving upon themselves ; this would be the grand *desideratum* ; their works would be the best teachers. I have no doubt but that if Annibal Carrache had patiently borne the brutal treatment, which unhappily and foolishly he permitted to break his heart ; had he wisely passed it by as the fault of others, in which he could have no participation ; and had he, after three or four years exercise of the public judgment, and of his own reflection upon what he had done, both as to matter and manner, at the Farnese Gallery, collected his spirits and good humour, and employed himself upon some other great work, even for nothing, if he could not get at it otherways, there can be no doubt, at least I have no doubt, but that he would have risen infinitely above his former work. This would be teaching indeed,

indeed, and would be of more importance towards advancing and exalting art, than all the scattered, heedless, ill-directed, and perhaps peevish and insidious patronage of all the Princes in Europe, thrown away as it so frequently is, upon hopeless, barren, worthless matter. It is impossible for an artist to reflect upon this transaction respecting the disappointment and chagrin which occasioned the death of Annibal Carrache, without indignation and horror. For, although it must be allowed, that the subjects painted in the Farnese Gallery are of a most unhappy choice, neither connected with ethicks, public utility, or with any thing exemplary or proper for the decoration of the great gallery or chamber of audience of such a personage as Cardinal Farnese, yet these were the subjects in general use at the time, and might then pass in the palace of a great Roman Prince of the Farnese family; and Odoardo Farnese probably forgot the ecclesiastical part of his character, when he approved, and no doubt encouraged, the carrying these designs into execution at the outset, and required nothing farther but to see them terminated in perfection; and this Annibal performed with such ability and splendor of talents, as to carry after them the admiration of the world ever since. As to the objection, however just it was, it looks like an after-thought, which had escaped both the artist and his noble employer, and probably was

overlooked, until the work came before the tribunal of the public. It would be too much to suppose, that Cardinal Farnese should have been for so many years altogether ignorant of the designs and subjects that Annibal was painting for him in his great gallery, or hall of audience; and yet nothing but this could (I will not say excuse) even afford the least palliation for the inhuman brutality of his conduct to such an artist.

But let me have done with these reflections; I have no time to put them in any order. I wish they had been made by somebody else, who could command more leisure, so as that I might have been left to pursue my own work; it is a great shame, that in the course of 300 years some of them (at least) have not been made before. If an artist can bring himself to take away any considerable portion of his time and application from his own proper concerns, in order to collect any matter of writing that he may think of public utility, no more ought to be expected from him; it would be unreasonable in others to demand, and silly in him to enterprize, any thing further. Other men, who have nothing else to do, may easily, and with great propriety ought to bestow all necessary time and attention in trimming, shortening, and polishing what they write; and, though they need not scrupulously adhere to the letter of Pope's advice, by keeping it nine years, yet there is
nothing

nothing to hinder their keeping it long enough for revision, and all the necessary purposes of corrections and polish ; but this matter is very different with an artist ; let him only take care to be understood, and that is enough. However, this business of patronage is so big with delusion, and delusion of the most mischievous and treacherous kind, that I do most ardently wish that some man of sufficient leisure, and such independence of circumstances and disposition as an advocate for truth ought to have, would, for the public benefit, handle this subject in its full extent, of times, places, persons, and circumstances ; it would afford room for a fine display of taste and knowledge, exceedingly variegated ; and, with respect to the more essential matters of disposition and character, Tacitus himself could not wish for a subject more replete with occasions for useful observation. He would here meet with matter of the most invidious, malignant kind, and yet so artfully concealed, confounded, and so politically enveloped, with the very reverse and most amiable appearances, as would require the utmost effort of his discriminating skill and penetration, before he could strip and drag it into the light in all its native deformity. And what such a man as Tacitus would relish much more, he might, in a Francis the First, and Lewis the Fourteenth, find something for the exercise of his panegyric, which

no man knew better how to employ and work up with a grace ; and Venuſtas, ſo finiſhed, and admirably adapted to engage and intereſt humanity, as could not fail of leaving the mind of his reader with a grateful reliſh not eaſily to be obliterated. Such a maſterly hand might preſent his readers with a moſt delightful picture in this part of the character of Alexander regarding patronage : the unboundedly generous, magnanimous, unenviouſ nature of the man who could find delight to be the witneſs and commemorator of the utmoſt diſplay of all the unreſtrained abilities of the heroes, of every ſpecies, who formed the circle about him, and were probably more attracted to him by the very circumſtance of this opportunity and ſafety of unreſtrained diſplay, than by any other hopes or rewards whatever. This would ſurely form (properly handled) one of the moſt ſtriking paſſages in the hiſtory of human exertions ; and yet it ought to be acknowledged in juſt vindication of human nature, that in certain ſtages of education (which are not uncommon), theſe great characters may be always found ready to come forward, when our Alexanders will have the candour and fair dealing to bear with the diſplay ; and, inſtead of ſpreading terror by their meddling, will have the magnanimity to permit a ſmile or a reproof, even from mere colour-grinders, when they may be ſo imprudent and forgetful of themſelves

selves as to venture upon the decision of matters beyond their knowledge. Such a beautiful, and, I am sorry to add, uncommon feature in the character of Alexander, would engage his generous encomiast to combat with Voltaire, or with any other, and oblige him to do right and justice to his hero in the other parts of his character. He would insist upon the past, and the expected injuries of the Grecian people from the great King of the Asiatics, he would send Nemesis herself as the conductor of Alexander across the Hellespont; and whenever youth, success, and human frailty, might fully any part of his journey with acts of passionate indiscretion, they would be obliterated by the graceful unction of the self-condemnation which followed, and by those admirable, equitable laws, and truly civilised Grecian usages, which his conquest enabled him to bestow upon the conquered, in lieu of that destructive barbarism, so hostile to every generous exertion which had long degraded the extensive and populous countries of Asia. In so much magnanimity, virtuous fortitude, and superiority to envy, vanity, and all those hateful base qualities, so obstructive to grand enterprises of every kind, how easily, and how satisfactorily we may recognise the Scholar of Aristotle. Had the exertions of Alexander's magnanimous disposition been displayed, even in a manufactory of artificial stone, or in a great scene of art, like that

at the Vatican, the hardihood of his own example, and the attractions of his equitable, candid qualities, would soon encircle him with a band of heroes in the several departments of art, whose abilities would astonish Europe. Something like this appeared under the amiable and admirable Carraches at St. Michael, in Bosco, at Bologna.

The deep researches and discoveries so infinitely important, for which art is indebted to Lionardo da Vinci, have been long a subject of my attention; and, during the thirteen years of my Professorship in the Academy, I have annually, in one mode or other, endeavoured to call the attention of the students to this great character, from whom so much had been and was still to be learned. It was absolutely from his loins, that all the Schools of Art in Europe have been impregnated with almost all the perfections that ennoble modern art. M. Angelo might, no doubt, have seen many drawings of Vinci, even of more importance to a young artist forming himself, than the small pen and ink drawing, which, with some others also engraved by Mr. Bartolozzi, were published by Mr. Chamberlain last year, from his Majesty's collection. Yet, supposing M. Angelo only to have seen that, or something like it, with G. Fran. Rustici, or any other friend of Vinci's, such a mind as Angelo's must there see at once almost all that he appears to have been in search of during his whole life, the
naked

naked body, employed in all the various actions and ways of pushing and pulling, variegated with such exquisite grace and delicacy, and with a purity and truth almost unequalled. In a word, he might see there all that could be desired from the most natural, faithful, and just use of the study of anatomy, in delineating the human body with fidelity and felicity, in all possible actions, which was Angelo's chief desideratum, and is now his greatest glory. What studies Vinci might have made from the antique statues or fragments, it is now difficult to say. His master Verrocchio must have had something in this way, as well as Ghiberti, Squarcione, and others. Moulding and making plaster casts, then much in use, must have so disseminated these matters, that no man, eager after perfection, could fail in obtaining them, and also the marble and bronze originals, collected by Cosmo and Lorenzo de Medici, though probably these last were bustos or other antiques more immediately connected with literary history ; therefore, something in the way of ancient perfection, Vinci might, and probably did, see and study. A small matter would be sufficient for such a mind as his, who, of all the moderns, seems to have least stood in need of any such assistance ; as he had himself started, and in the most admirable and complete manner, the very identical track of study pursued by the ancient Greeks ; and I have little doubt but
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that if he had been rightly employed, he was (with respect to every thing regarding the human form) able to dispute the palm with the stoutest of those Greeks, at the very time that he was obliged to trifle away his attention upon the Academy at Milan, or upon the still more damnable business of contriving the aqueduct for the river Adda. But to confine ourselves to what he actually did perform: Correggio seems to have formed himself upon Vinci more than on all the world besides. The truly divine sweetness and *allegria*, so spiritual and sentimentally exquisite, of some of Vinci's heads, is found every where in the works of Correggio: here he borrowed much, and ably, with the same same relieve and fine broad *piazzata* manner. When I think of the copy of his S. Anna, Madonna, &c. in S. Celso, and of our unfinished Cartoon of the same design, in the Academy, and of some other similar vestiges of Vinci's abilities in this way, I cannot help regarding him, not only as divine (to use the warm Italian phrase), but also as *unique*. I have endeavoured at it; and yet I do not, nor cannot recollect even one single example amongst all the ancient statues, not to mention of the same excellence, but even of the same angelic exquisitely sentimental species. It seems something suggested by ideas arising from Christianity, which had never been called into existence before. I could much wish that some able man was to
make

make a print of this Cartoon of S. Anna, &c, even in its unfinished, wretched state : the Academy could not do better, than to tempt to that end by some premium, in order to compensate for any possible neglect or inattention in the public to a work in such a state. I do not know whether there be any print of that at S. Celso: but if there be one, or any drawing of it, in the possession of any person who may chance to read this letter, I would be much obliged to him for a sight of it. I have, in another place, had occasion to touch a little upon the exaltation and melioration which Rafaele endeavoured after, from what he saw in Vinci, and also upon what Giorgione, Titian, Fr. Bartolomeo, and Fra. Bastiano, borrowed from the same source, in the way of relieve and colouring. As to some cold-blooded, shallow remarks, which Scannelli, and other flimsy observers after him, have made from the ruined appearance of Vinci's famous Cenacolo in the Refectory at Milan, these remarks should have been confined to the single instance from whence they arose, to the mere circumstance of the oil-colours (with which, unfortunately, the picture was painted on the wall of that convent,) having (as Scannelli himself observes) been contaminated, and in great measure destroyed by the salts exuded from the mortar underneath. Scannelli, who was one of those eager prejudiced partisans, which have been the scandal of the several schools

schools of Italy, had done better to have reserved his loquacity for some more pertinent occasion, as no one could then have any doubt, but that for a work of painting on mortar, oil-colours will not answer so well as fresco, and that Correggio was very right in preferring fresco to oil, in the painting his admirable dome at Parma: but to transfer the fault from the material to the work, and to apply it generally to other works where the material is not the same, must appear scandalously false and impertinent, particularly to any one who had seen Vinci's picture (half-figures) of Christ speaking to those around him, about his resurrection on the third day, in the possession of Don Paolo Borghesi. Or, not to go from the famous Cenacolo itself, any man that had seen the glorious studies in chalks and other crayons of the same size, for the heads and other essential parts of this very picture, must have been shocked at the injustice, rascality, and want of feeling of such observations. But as I mean to take a final leave of Lionardo, after the publication of this letter, it may not be amiss to terminate my little remarks on this illustrious character, by inserting here the following passage, transcribed from my Third Lecture, first read in the Academy, April 4, 1785. " In the stronger expressions also, Lionardo seems to have gone greater lengths than any cotemporary or succeeding artist, in marking the emotions of the soul

soul in the action and countenance; his enthusiasm, though great, is always equalled by the coolness and solidity of his judgment. Truth and energy go hand in hand, in whatever I have seen, that was really his: there could not be a more happy example of this union, than his famous picture of the Last Supper at Milan. There is a print of this picture done from a drawing of Rubens; the deformities, slovenly and precipitate incorrectness of Rubens' style of drawing, is visible throughout; it gives but a lame idea of Vinci's work. The small copy at S. Germain Auxerrois is much better, though greatly wanting in the spirit and decision of the original: all that happy finess in the diversity of character, expressive agitation, and tender sentiment, appear to have been but little felt, and are ill rendered by the cold, timid hand of the copyist. It may be that I saw this copy to too great a disadvantage (from the want of light and proximity), to do it justice; but the original, the glorious work of Lionardo, is now no more. I saw the last of it at Milan; for in passing through that city on my return home (in company with my long-esteemed, amiable, and ingenious friend and brother Academician, Mr. Rigaud), I saw a scaffold erected in the Refectory, and one half of the picture painted over by one Pietro Mazzi. No one was at work, it being Sunday; but there were two men on the scaffold, one of whom was speaking to

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the other with much earnestness about that part of the picture which had been repainted: I felt much agitated; and having no idea of his being an artist (much less the very identical artist who was employed to destroy so beautiful and venerable a ruin), I objected with warmth to the shocking and ignorant manner in which this was carried on, pointing out at the same time, the immense difference between the part that was untouched, and what had been repainted. He answered, that the new work was but a dead colour, and that the painter meant to go over it all again, Oh! malòre, said I, worse and worse! If this painter has thus lost his way, when he was immediately going over the lines and features of Lionardo's figures, what will become of him when they are all thus blotted out, and that, without any guide in repassing over the work, he shall be utterly abandoned to his own ignorance! On my remonstrating afterwards with some of the Friars, and intreating them to take down the scaffold, and save the half of the picture which was yet remaining, they told me the Convent had no authority in this matter, and that it was done by the order of the Count de Firmian, the Imperial Secretary of State. Thus perished one of the most justly celebrated monuments of modern art, particularly for that part of design which regards the skilful delineation of the various sentiments of the soul, in
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all the diversities of character, expression of countenance, and of action.*

Last March I read what follows, inserted in this place, of that Lecture:—"Wright, in his account of the curiosities of Milan, mentions a room of the Marquis Casenedi, entirely furnished with drawings of Rafaele, Carrachi, Del Sarto, and others; but, to use his own words, "Those which are most admirable in this collection, are the Cartoons of Lionardo da Vinci, done in chalks, but raised a little higher with other crayons; they are so excellent, that Raphael, as they affirm, there copied them all. He has certainly taken the countenance of one of them in his Transfiguration Piece; it is the figure below the mount, which holds the possessed boy; at least the one put me very much in mind of the other. Eleven of them are designs of all the heads, and some of the hands, which Leonardo put into his celebrated piece of the Last Supper, painted by him in fresco, in the Refectory of the Gratie, which is now in a manner spoiled. Two of those Cartoons contain

* The reader may depend on the above relation, to be a true statement of this remarkable and melancholy fact: I committed it to writing on my return to the inn, and it made part of a letter which I shortly after wrote to Mr. Edmund Burke; and either that gentleman, or Sir Joshua Reynolds, shewed that letter to Mr. Thomas Hollis, who inserted that part of it in his memoirs, with a very polite and obliging mention of me.

tain two heads a piece; so that in the eleven Cartoons are drawings of thirteen heads.

“ These Cartoons of Leonardo, were some years since purchased of the family of this Marquis Casenedi, by Robert Udny, Esq. a gentleman well known for his public spirit, and love of virtú. On my enquiring after these Cartoons of Mr. Udny, the account he gave me was, that they were well preserved, even in excellent condition; they were framed, and covered with the old blistered glass of the time, easily cognisable from its irregular undulating surface: that, as his wish was to enrich his country with these studies of Vinci, he did not include them in the collection he sold to the Empress of Russia, but sent them to the Palace at Buckingham-House, where Mr. Dalton had engaged to shew them to his Majesty, and where they might have been purchased for any sum, even for 100l. as Mr. Udny wanted nothing so much as that they should remain here. But after about five weeks remaining at the Palace, and neither seeing or hearing any thing from Mr. Dalton in all this time, Mr. Udny was surprised one morning, on coming down to breakfast, to find these invaluable Cartoons returned to him, with no other message, than that they would not do. It is more than probable that Dalton, in this procedure, acted only on the defensive, as all such contracted, miserable reptiles generally do, by re-
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cunning to his cunning and left-handed policy, in contriving some mean dirty deception to discredit this work of Lionardo, and consequently to prevent the owner of it from being personally known to his Majesty, and thereby having an opportunity of interfering with the opinions of Mr. Dalton on any future occasions. When inferior, worthless men, are about great Princes, thus will they be ever deceived, and even turned aside from doing the good they intended; and, unfortunately for the country, but very naturally, Mr. Udny, piqued and full of honest indignation, wrote to Russia, presented those Cartoons to the Empress, and received a very honourable acknowledgment and present in return. On my suggesting to him the idea of getting them back; that possibly their importance might not be known in such a country as Russia, more especially as they were divested of all glitter in their homely modest garb, of old glass and frame; that the Academy would be glad to have them; and that even I, though persecuted, plundered, and traversed for so many years by a scoundrel combination and cabal, eagerly employed to marr both my reputation and interest, and with such an unexampled brutality—yet still, matters were not so bad, but that I could, and would raise more than 100l. in order to be the happy means of depositing them in some public place, for the use and entertainment of this great

city; Mr. Udny shook his head and told me, he had a memorial of one of them remaining, a copy, in the same size and material, made by the ingenious Mr. John Mortimer, which he immediately produced, and generously obliged me to accept of, as an anodyne for my uneasiness at so great a national loss: a loss that I felt in its full force, from my recollection of being present, in passing through Milan, at the destruction of the picture in the Refettorio at the Gratie, which Lionardo painted (not in fresco, as Wright says, but in oil) from these Cartoons, which were now, not only the originals, but unique.

“ Gentlemen, here is a marginal note upon this passage, which it may not be amiss to read to you. If ever these matters come to be published, the reader ought to be informed, by way of apology, that when the above conversation with Mr. Udney (respecting such an important concern of art) was related in the Academy, I thought it would be criminal not to give it historically, faithfully, scrupulously. That I was very little in the habit of mentioning my own mere concerns, either in the Academy, or any where else; and that, perhaps, the reason why my own unpleasant situation was so present to me at the time I had this conversation with Mr. Udny, was, that my house had, but a few weeks before, been broke open and robbed of a considerable sum, which I had provided

to purchase the lease of a house, where I wished quietly and retired to carry on another work for the public, about which I had been for some time engaged. What aggravated the matter still more was, that I had good reason to be assured, that this robbery was not committed by mere thieves, who who wanted what was stolen, but by some limbs of a motley, shameless combination, some of whom passed for my friends, well knew what I was about, and wanted to interrupt and prevent it, by stripping me of the necessary means of carrying it on. In the higher concerns of life such mean proceedings are common enough, particularly in this country; and such great men as Messrs. Burke, Fox, Sheridan, or Pitt, may laugh at the malignity or impudent rascality that pursues and would impede them, surrounded and kept in countenance as they are, by large parties of powerful confederates, united with them in the same interest. But politics in private life, employed to destroy the credit and interest of a man, labouring to serve the public in the arts, where he must necessarily be insulated, and without confederates—good God! how horrible! And how much are you, David, to be envied, blest as you are, amongst a public but little acquainted with this bear-garden business, and which, even in its worst times, was habitually exercised in honestly and urbanely meeting the efforts of art with an indul-

gence, estimation, and reception, so adequate, and so generous ! But let us turn from these reflexions to Lionardo da Vinci, the copy mentioned above, of the two heads from Lionardo by Mr. Mortimer ; here it is, ably performed, and will, I dare say, give you a very good idea of the rest.

As to Lionardo's ability in drawing the naked, we may safely conclude, from what appears in the Battle for the Standard, that nothing but the scarcity of his works could have prevented his obtaining the highest degree of reputation in this part of his art also. His Treatise on Painting discovers the utmost sagacity, depth and familiarity of knowledge, respecting the human figure in all its diversity of characters, actions, and motions. His occasional observations upon the anatomy of the human body, the articulations of the bones, the figure and offices of the muscles, the equiponderation of its parts, with and without adventitious weights, and its curious and necessary mechanism to obtain the power of vigorous exertion,—these masterly observations have long since made all intelligent people regret, that the treatise he had expressly written on the subject of anatomy, and to which he so often refers, should unfortunately have been so long buried in the library at Buckingham-House, where it can be of no use or entertainment to the artists of ours, of other academies, or to the world in general. What may not be expected from

from such an author, on such a subject! Besides, it may illustrate the history of anatomy, as this book is perhaps the earliest treatise on the subject of Osteology and Myology; it must have been near fifty years prior to the publication of Vesalius: and the short work of Mondinius, written about the year 1478, treats of very little besides the *viscera*. I spoke several times to our late Professor of Anatomy, Dr. William Hunter, requesting him to endeavour at obtaining the publication of this work, which does so much honour to our art; and I now address myself to my brethren of the Academy, submitting it to their consideration, whether it would not highly become this Institution, to petition his Majesty to grant us the honour of printing this work, under the inspection, and at the expence of the Academy. If it should be imperfect in any part, this can be no reason for withholding it; it would be gratefully accepted by the public in any state: it cannot recover any thing where it is, and it may lose. The importance of this digression (if it be one) will plead its excuse.

“ After so many years repeated efforts to obtain, for the public, the printing of this work, and regret at not succeeding, you may judge, young Gentlemen, what my satisfaction must have been, about a month since, on receiving from Mr. Chamberlain (the keeper of the King’s drawings and medals) the first number of this invaluable

work of Lionardo, which, to judge from this specimen now published, is likely to come forward in a manner the most complete and adequate.—The engraved part is a *fac simile*, where the writing is reversed in the manner Lionardo has left it. On the other side, the writing is printed so as to read in the usual way; to which is also added, an English translation. There is nothing further to wish on this head, but that his Majesty may soon enjoy the satisfaction of receiving, for this benefit conferred on the art, the hearty thanks of Europe, I ought to say of all civilised society; since, fortunately, the lovers of art, and readers of such works who will have to thank his Majesty for this favour, are now not confined to Europe. Bartolozzi, whose great professional abilities have contributed so essentially to the advancement of regular, sound art in this country, has a glorious opportunity afforded him of preserving the fidelity, vigour, spirit, and beauty of these designs, of the father of his own school, and, every thing considered, of all the other schools. The extreme purity of design in the figures at work in the third plate of this first number, cannot be seen and considered without extacy. It is to be hoped there are many designs of this kind; and you have all of you an interest in wishing most ardently that no other business might interfere to prevent this valued, respectable Member of our Academy from
devoting

devoting himself entirely to this more than master-work, for which he is peculiarly fitted; and, as he has already run through a long and glorious career, how desirable it would be to endeavour as much as possible at precluding accident, and to employ himself first upon those designs, which, like that just mentioned, require all his depth and skill in drawing, leaving those others, which are more laboured, for the last, or to be done by others if time should fail him.

So much I thought myself bound to say of Leonardo da Vinci; and if any man was to affirm, that the exaltation of the Medici family was the real *blight* which interrupted the further growth of Art at Florence, I should not feel disposed to contradict him. A man who had honestly devoted his genius, industry, his whole life to qualify himself for serving his country in any art of public estimation, has surely just, honourable, incontrovertible claims, upon the attention of that public; and when Vinci, as became a true citizen, had placed his reliance on the good faith of the public, and of his country, he had every good and lawful reason to expect that no man or men, pretending to any integrity of character, would presume to trample upon his honest claims, by employing either the force or fraud of authority or influence in supplanting and preventing the exercise of his abilities, by preferring to the occasions of public service

service men of inferior talents. This family of the Medici had much and serious matter to answer for. Such a man as Vinci, reduced to the necessity of first smuggling his unfought-for works out of his country through the hands of merchants, and even after his return from Milan being again reduced to smuggling and concealment, and without advantage either to his interest or reputation, finding nothing else to do with his time than secretly to employ it in assisting to perfectionate the work of his friend Gio. Fran. Rustichi, and perhaps to have been the innocent occasion of extending the persecution which had so long followed himself to the very work for S. Giovanni which he had assisted his friend Rustichi to perform, and for which (notwithstanding its acknowledged excellence) Rustichi was so ill paid as to occasion the ruin of his affairs. Disingenuous, dishonest, hellish influence! how baneful, how mortal, and how disgusting, is its interference in such matters! No man in his senses can think of drawing any arguments in favour of infidelity or irreligion, from the artificial, base, hypocritical conduct of such Popes, Cardinals, and Magnifico's. Wretched men! although they might have thus lived politicians, yet they might possibly have repented, and died Christians. But even this may be well doubted, as we hear of no *restitution* made either to Vinci or Angelo, nor
any

any acknowledgment for the restitution that could not be made, in the irreparable injury done to the Art, to the country, and to posterity, who were all thus equally defrauded in their just and honest claims.

I shall now take up our little statement of more recent facts; and mention, that shortly after my return from my studies on the Continent, I found that Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was then much employed in painting portraits, had thoughts about raising his prices, in order to lessen his business, and thereby obtain more time for the prosecution of historical works, which shortly after took place, to his great honour. His bias for *chiaro scuro* and colouring, in which he was so excellent, inclined him, generally speaking, to rest contented with the mode of design pursued in the Bolognese plan (as stated in the before-mentioned little poetical gem of Agostino Carrache), and resolving to employ his whole force in adding to this respectable plan a degree of energy, grace, and beauty of *chiaro scuro* and colouring, which had never been united to it before. Hogarth was dead; and Hayman, who never aimed higher than to be the follower of Peter Cortona, retired. Wright (of Derby) and Mortimer were for the most part employed in restraining and confining their abilities to the effects of fire-light, and to imitations of Salvator Rosa;

Rosa; which was much to be regretted, as they were both very capable of matters much more important. I could with pleasure dwell longer upon many admirable qualities in the deservedly-esteemed works of those very ingenious Artists, and shall take some more proper occasion to gratify myself in that respect; and as to those Artists who are happily still the ornaments of their several departments, posterity will have too much interest in the reputation of their labours not to do them ample justice. Things being in this state, and a Royal Academy recently founded, I had great hopes of being able, in some way or other, either by conversation, writing, or painting, or all together, to impress on the minds of our young Artists, whom we should educate, such an idea of the urgent necessity for perfection, as would induce them to the warm pursuit of that plan of study, of uniting the Grecian with the Italian art, which had been the unremitting sole object of my own attention; as would no doubt be tiresomely apparent to any one who was at the pains of looking over that inquiry above mentioned, and that other work at the Adelphi, which followed as a remaining part of the same undertaking; and however lightly either he or I might estimate the little that has been done, yet I have been obliged to pass through a very hard, long,

long, and illiberal gauntlet, to perform even that little.

It would be arrogating too much to suppose I had, of myself, fallen upon this scheme of study, or that I was any other than a follower in the track Mr. Hufsey had chalked out ; and which his impatience or his misfortune, his own want of fortitude, or the impudent, shameless perseverance of his opponents, prevented him from carrying into execution, and I fear brought about a tendency to mental derangement which left the matter hopeless. To be the happy instrument of introducing to his country the true sublime style of historical art, founded upon the Grecian purity of design, and blended with whatever was great and estimable in the celebrated leaders of the Italian schools, and their followers, who imitated and improved upon them, required an unusual felicity and extensive concurrence of circumstances, which were liable to interruption and impediment from many and very different quarters. Like neighbour Goodfellow, Pliable, and the other occasional companions of Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress, many artists, however right at the outset, would be liable to stick by the way in the particular sciences, which, though of indispensable use considered as necessary means, are notwithstanding most baneful and destructive when pursued too far, without reference to the
proposed

proposed end ; and this unhappily has been but too often exemplified in almost every human pursuit of any complexity. There are many reasons which induce me to think that this important plan of art, adopted by Mr. Hufsey, was a subject of pretty deep and general attention at Bologna, particularly amongst the young artists, when Hufsey was studying there under Ercole Lelli ; and it is not improbable, but that Lelli himself was the author of it ; his drawing is so remarkable for purity and science, and his small anatomical figure, considered independently of the anatomical skill, is of so admirable a style as to form and character, and the excellent, most pertinent traditionary remarks upon the defects of some of the finest antique statues, which I occasionally heard from some of Lelli's scholars who were still alive in my time, puts the matter, with me at least, out of all doubt, they are all symmetrical parts of the same total. It is then to be regretted that Lelli had not himself followed up this pursuit, and left to others the laborious mere anatomical business of the several wax preparations built upon the skeletons, running into all the infinitesimal details of the gravid uterus, the organs of hearing, vision, and other minute particulars of endless mere observation, upon which so much of his time and attention was thrown away ; for such time and attention are always thrown away when

when thus employed upon what may be as well done by inferior characters. But men must live by their labour ; and perhaps Benedict XIV. who employed Lelli's talents in this way, would not be inclined to give encouragement and employment to his talents in another way, which very probable was infinitely above the comprehension even of this excellent Pope. And as men of genius are sure to carry their energy into whatever they undertake, the reputation which follows their efforts, even in those pursuits where we regret their having been engaged, is apt to mislead, and give a kind of countenance to the notion of shallow people, of I know not what inconstancy and unsettled pursuit of new enterprises, which they absurdly would have us to believe is the reason why men of great genius have very often left their undertakings unaccomplished ; and thus that virtue, which is able to content, accommodate, and make the best use of what hard necessity forces upon it, is by men of shallow observation (and perhaps a little envy and malignity) mistaken for a fickle, desultory weakness, which would really imply the very reverse of genius and vigour of mind. Lelli then, Hufsey's predecessor, was thus lost, by wasting his time and attention upon the pursuits of anatomy ; and Stewart, Hufsey's successor or follower, shared a similar ill fate in another necessary means, and finished an

Antiquarian

Antiquarian and Architect; whilst Hufsey himself, with sublimer and more advanced talents than either, eager to crown his art with the highest conceivable perfection, appears unfortunately to have lost himself by wandering too far in theological speculations. But supposing even that Lelli had not wasted his life in multiplying anatomical preparations, but that he, or any of his scholars, had endeavoured to blend and incorporate the anatomical with all the other necessary studies which formed the constituent parts of this admirable plan; yet, at Bologna, how were they to find employment for it? Woeful experience would soon shew them, that the time for exertion was long since passed, and that all the churches and palaces at Bologna being filled with pictures of celebrity upon the old and less perfect plan, this mere circumstance of pre-occupation would necessarily prevent their being employed to do much, or to have any followers; and the scheme would inevitably become abortive or insignificant from want of general or sufficient culture. Hufsey's hopes were likely to be better founded in a new country like England, where happily this pre-occupation was prevented by our former religious bigotry, which kept out art of all kinds, except mere servile face-painting, and a little landscape. Here then, in England, if Hufsey had succeeded, and contrived to throw himself out in some noble

noble example of this sublimated style, it would soon excite imitation, and a desire to eclipse it. Even those who would be most likely to under-rate it openly, would secretly profit, and form themselves by it; any little storm from combination and cabal would soon blow over; and if it did not, the continuation of his exertions would be his best defence. Cool impartiality, if not gratitude, would soon grow up, and his successors would be enabled to expand and to follow the clue he had given, as they could want for nothing in the way of materials, but what an academical or national collection of pictures and plaster casts would happily supply. No doubt, these pictures of the old masters, separated, and in private hands, besides the mischief of pre-occupation, are in other respects also likely to perplex and retard the progress of good taste. From an infirmity very natural, and too frequently met with, the proprietors of those old works become, after a little time, so many zealots and blind contracted partizans, not less hostile to the reputation of living artists, than to the growth of the art; and they are often equally deceived by the excessive praise and admiration which may be lavished on their old pictures; as, in some cases, nothing more is meant than the old game, well known in the world, of paying court to them, through this

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medium,

medium, for some other end: but, even when the praise is honest, it often happens that this praise and admiration, however warmly expressed, is confined to some part of the mechanical conduct, the mere mode of pencilling or handling this or that particular, folds, leafage, gradations of tint, or some such matter, which an artist might wish to incorporate with his own manner. I remember meeting Mr. Wilson one day, looking over a collection of pictures at Prestage's auction-room: on his pointing out, with much enthusiasm, some excellence in the middle distance of a picture, to which he wished to direct my attention, "Yes, yes, very true, I heartily agree with you," said I; "surely there is no man living who is able to paint a landscape of so much excellence!" Though this was said almost laughingly, yet I saw his countenance lower, like a tempest gathering on his own Snowdon; and seizing him by the elbow, "My dear Wilson," said I, "don't be angry, I only wanted to show you the use, or rather the abuse, to which your remark might be converted, after you had left the room, by such men as Blackwood, or the Doctors Chauncy or Bragge, had any thing in their possession been the subject of your remark. I very well know that your approbation went no further than your remark, and that, as a *whole*, and painted by any one

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“ at present, it could not be suffered, and much
 “ less put in competition with any work of yours,
 “ or of a man much your inferior. To say the
 “ truth, I cannot see (interest and vanity apart)
 “ what satisfaction men who are not of the art
 “ can derive from the inspection of such per-
 “ formances of contemptible, uninteresting to-
 “ tality, inapplicable to any purpose of general
 “ concern. You and I might find great pleasure
 “ in looking at what you have so judiciously
 “ pointed out, but what the devil are they to
 “ look for?” But all this evil of old pictures is
 not only removed, but the highest public utility is
 derived, by arranging them together in a national
 or academical gallery, where freedom of remark
 can be safely indulged. The work of each old
 master then becomes the corrective of the other;
 and the voice of truth, and the road to advance-
 ment, happily results from their general testi-
 mony.

In a conversation I once had with the late Duke
 of Northumberland (who was Hufsey's friend
 and patron), his Grace told me, as a matter
 which he could not account for, that he had once
 proposed to Mr. Hufsey an employment which
 he thought would be perfectly agreeable, which
 was, to make drawings, large as the originals,
 of all the celebrated antique statues, that he
 would build a gallery to place them in, and that

Huffey refused. I could not help observing to the Duke, that I was not surpris'd at Mr. Huffey's declining such a proposal; that it was to be expected from a man who had been forming himself (together with other studies) upon those antiques, in order to acquire abilities for the production of other and original works, in which opportunities might occur of disputing for the palm of excellence with those very antiques themselves;—that perhaps what Huffey had in his mind, still remained to be done;—that the work for the *Adelphi*, which introduced me to the honour of his Grace's notice, was, circumstanced as I found myself, the best attempt in my power to supply a part of this grand desideratum, which no doubt was Mr. Huffey's object;—and that another part of it would (with God's assistance) be attempted in another work of the story of Pandora, which I had long in contemplation, and for which I had made many studies. The Duke seem'd to feel what I said respecting this excellent man, and, in a manner that did his Grace great honour, express'd much regret that he had not thought of some other way of employing his abilities, and that Huffey himself was much to blame in not pointing out some undertaking which might meet both their wishes.

A good deal of time has elapsed since that work of mine at the *Adelphi* has been out of my hands,

hands, surely more than enough to allow for the subsiding of any of those little temporary heats which must ever unavoidably happen between different parties, in transactions of such long duration, and where my own infirmity of temper, whatever it might amount to, would be so likely to interfere. The general tenour of the Society's conduct, in the carrying on of that work, has been great, exemplary, and really worthy the best age of civilised society. The more I reflect on the whole of that transaction, the more I feel my heart disposed to overflow with every acknowledgment and gratitude to God, as the prime cause, and to the Society as the happy instrument and means by which the occasion was provided of enabling me to make one effectual attempt in the art. Such a Society only, where nothing was personal, and whose views were widely extended through so many branches of knowledge, and almost to every thing that could meliorate and tend to give perfection to civilization, could have allowed of the exertion which it was my wish to make; and although I made it a condition with them, on undertaking the work, that the subjects, and the matter of which they were composed, should be entirely of my own choice and fabrication, without interference from any quarter; yet the cheerful politeness and punctuality with which they performed this condition,

so delicate, and so alluring to interference, and the heads and members of the Society so numerous, and many of them of such consequence, both as to knowledge and rank, I can never think of it without heart-felt satisfaction, and the greatest respect and thankfulness to them. I then, alone, am accountable for the subject matter depicted on their walls: and as almost 300 years had intervened since the painting of *Rafaele's Camera della Senatura* in the Vatican, and that every branch of knowledge had been greatly advanced and perfected during that interval, the education of the 18th century furnishing numberless advantages in the science of civil polity, of ethics, physics, and other knowledges of the most important, deepest interest, there remained nothing to wish for, but to devote myself zealously to the work; and though my means of support were indeed small, yet my hopes were great, founded upon assiduity, and fortitude enough to sacrifice all personal vanity, comforts, and even conveniences, that might interrupt and stand in the way of what I had undertaken.

Some of those who, by the courtesy of language, are commonly called friends, were ready enough to advise me to make an effort on this occasion, to launch out a little in figure and appearance, to hire a smart servant to open my door, with a long *et cetera*, like other artists, whom
they

they were pleased to consider as infinitely my inferiors, and who notwithstanding found their account in doing all this; and even much more; that it was a matter of decent conformity, which every man owed to the society he lived in; that to adopt a contrary conduct, and to live like a hermit in his cell, would appear odd and strange; that it would be liable to a thousand scoundrel interpretations, of wrongheadedness, misanthropy, meanness, avarice, what not; and that I must well know, that some of my competitors would be ready enough to make this rascally use of it, more especially in such a town as London, where there were many people so giddily and dissipatedly occupied, as to make them the facile, certain dupes of any misinformation, even less supported by appearances; and that very unpleasant, and even vexatious consequences might follow, that would give me cause to repent.

“ What you say is all true,” said I, and you must
 “ very well know how grating such sacrifices must
 “ be to my feelings, as no man is more calculated,
 “ both by nature and the habits of education, to
 “ relish and to lap myself in the elysium of social
 “ enjoyments, than I am, nor can more heartily
 “ detest any unsocial principles that tend to
 “ disqualify and estrange us from it; this all
 “ my friends must well know to be remarkably
 “ the case with me. But, alas! you see I have

“ no choice left, but either to relinquish the
 “ thought of doing the work, or to carry it on
 “ in the manner I have been stating to you, by
 “ making the best, most decent, but most manly
 “ use of the means within my power, by consider-
 “ ing this work as claiming my first concern, and
 “ every thing respecting myself in subordination
 “ to it; and that although my present expendi-
 “ ture, already too contracted in your opinion,
 “ could not be increased even ten pounds a year,
 “ without throwing me into debt and dependance,
 “ breaking my spirits, and perhaps leaving me in
 “ a jail; yet, as my hopes are not grounded
 “ upon the being able to increase my expenditure,
 “ and as the undertaking is of that noble, gene-
 “ rous kind as is truly worthy any personal sacri-
 “ fice I can make, you must permit me to assure
 “ you, that notwithstanding all that you or any
 “ one else can say to the contrary, yet I shall not
 “ hesitate to go on, and meet all, and even more
 “ than you have stated, with whatever patience
 “ and resignation I can; and though I cannot add
 “ to my expenditure and appearance, yet perhaps,
 “ if it be necessary, I can still retrench, and do
 “ without many things; that with God’s assistance
 “ the attempt should be made directly; and that,
 “ after all, there was no great hardship in being
 “ my own servant, even if I was obliged to go
 “ out of lodgings, and to take a house: that a
 “ hole

“ hole might be cut in the door to receive mes-
 “ sages when I should be from home ; and that
 “ this expedient could not be very discreditable, as
 “ it was probably of pretty general use formerly,
 “ in times of less parade, and was still kept up by
 “ the students in the inns of court.” Dialogues
 to this effect I have had many ; and this is inserted
 here for the perusal of any one who might have
 been so foolish as to suffer himself to be deceived by
 the impertinence of any mean, artful fellow, with
 whom I never had any personal acquaintance, and
 who might wish to ingratiate and recommend
 himself to the good favour of my opponents. But
 even this would not have been a sufficient induce-
 ment for my inserting it, but that I am persuaded
 it will have its use with young artists, as there can
 be but very few of them who will ever find them-
 selves in a situation less eligible for great under-
 takings, particularly those who may happen to be
 born on this or the other side of the Tweed ; as
 it is a native of Ireland only that is likely to experi-
 ence the superior excruciating curse of struggling
 alone, his best friends perhaps so warmly engaged
 in the interests of some of his rivals, as to leave him
 unaided by any cheering partialities, and without
 other reliance than what may be expected from
 magnanimity and generous candour. An Irish artist
 may think himself well off, if his countrymen are
 not against him, in order to curry favour for them-
 selves ;

selves; and that he be not sacrificed to their
 timidity, servility, or convenience, whenever he
 should attempt high matters, where the success
 would justify pretension to take any lead or su-
 periority. A candidate for a watchman's place,
 or to carry milk or a sedan chair, may stand a com-
 mon chance; but that it is very different in higher
 matters, is too well known, to need my offering
 instances of great lustre, which must occur to every
 man's recollection. I know very well that many
 will doubt the prudence of stating such harsh
 facts, however true; but then they must allow
 me to say, that any artist who will have the pa-
 tience to acquire the glory of going through such
 an ordeal, will not want the courage, and may well
 be allowed the little indulgence of looking back
 with triumph and gratulation for having passed it.
 However grating this state of things may be to
 our feelings, yet, as it is more a matter of regret
 and pity than of blame, it can be patiently endured
 by a man of some philosophy: as he must well
 know that the Irish, like other men, are formed
 by circumstances; that they are of an excellent
 nature, as might naturally be expected from their
 almost peculiarly mild and genial climate, and
 have truly nothing reprehensible that is not fairly
 chargeable upon their political, debased, wretched
 situation. Since it is by every party acknow-
 ledged, one may observe, without palliation, or
 fear

fear of giving offence, that our government is, from the accumulation and inveteracy of certain abuses of ancient usages, necessarily carried on by influence and corruption, and until some salutary reform be adopted cannot be carried on otherwise ; and that the silent baneful operations of this great evil of corruption, the prolific parent of so many others, have been in some degree resisted and counteracted by that extensive pursuit of improvement in all the various branches and articles of manufactures and commerce, which has given occasion for so much rectitude, amenity and polish of the right kind, and have imprinted on the minds of the good people of England a deep sense of the value of excellence. How wisely and how much is comprised in that beautiful allegory of the ancients, in making Ceres the cause and parent of legislation ! How admirably and gracefully does it extend to every species of honest, commendable industry, to manufactures, to arts, and to commerce ! Nothing can exceed the ingenuity, oration, and wonderful identity (or, if that term is inaccurate, connection) of all the parts of this allegorical idea ; it supposes (and most truly, that we even cannot, for any time, or in any tolerable degree, enjoy those gifts of God, without disposing ourselves to merit and preserve them by just and equal laws ; and even, to consider it on the other side, that whenever we have the justice and magnanimity

unanimity to submit ourselves to the guidance of those laws, we shall not be long before those fruits and blessings of industry are showered down upon us ; and further, that under certain degrees of brutal violence, injustice, pressures, and partialities, either these blessings will never be given to us, or they will fly from us and be withdrawn, whene'er we have rendered ourselves thus unworthy of the divine favour. This allegory of Ceres will explain, pertinently enough, any difference that may be found in our two islands ; for, on the supposition that the spirit of influence and corruption is equally extended in Ireland as it is here, and that the pursuit of improvement in manufactures and commerce is less, this will easily and very naturally account for any difference of manners in the people of the two countries. Children of the same parent happy clime, there can be no difference between them but what is created by the difference of circumstances. I will not attempt to say what would be the event, or how long these contrary principles of improvement and corruption would be likely to continue in collision, if left to themselves to fight it out here ; but it may be affirmed, with great certainty, that the present altered state of Europe, the existing circumstances here, and all around us, will now soon put an end to this scuffle one way or other: either a salutary reform must soon take place, to the annihilation of influence and corrup-

corruption ; or manufactures, and the commerce with those manufacturers, must sink from our prospect. The eagle penetration of Mr. Burke had long foreseen this ; and, in his *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (before-mentioned), where he strenuously endeavours to recommend the best mode of public administration the circumstances of the time would then allow of, he concludes with the following remarkable words : “ This, with allowances for human
 “ frailty, may, probably, be the general character
 “ of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to
 “ the House of Commons, when the House of
 “ Commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things
 “ must remain in their present confusion, until
 “ they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence, or until they sink into the dead repose of
 “ despotism.” But as things mend, when they can be no worse, direful necessity, though always an undesirable, is yet sometimes a most salutary and admirable teacher ; and the time is, perhaps, fast approaching, when the liberal principles and good sense of the men of England and Ireland will find their true interest in spurning all undue influence and corruption, and in regarding nothing but the indulgence of those generous feelings which are the natural offspring of strict and common justice, of equal privileges and equal laws : and
 when-

whenever, by the mercy of God, that time shall arrive, it will be then, and not before, that an ingenious artist may expect to find himself the native of a country that will not be afraid to take an honest interest in the integrity and glory of his labours.

But to resume our narration ; with the space in the great room at the Adelphi, and the generous, liberal views of the Society, who were to hold their sessions in it, ample opportunity offered for a work, which, though in a series, should be *one* and *entire*, comprehending a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*, illustrative in all its various parts of this moral maxim, viz. the absolute necessity of cultivating both our mental and bodily faculties, and substituting the superior love and pursuit of truth and justice, necessarily required as the foundation of civilised society, in lieu of that brutal violence, fraud, and the consequent miseries of the savage state. In such a work, I foresaw something might be attempted on Hufsey's plan ; and what I valued much more was, that the subjects, which occurred to me, would associate that plan with matter of such interest, as might consecrate the work to the *mclioration*, *liberties*, and *reform* of mankind. Resolving then, in the very outset, to throw aside and spurn all beggarly adulation which had contaminated and disgraced so many illustrious works, and conscientiously, and without fear, to follow

follow truth and justice, and melioration, wherever they should lead, it does not surprise me, and I feel no sorrow or repentance to find my work and myself involved in the same fate with my country in its struggles for that political happiness which results from the genuine freedom of equal laws, uncontaminated with either personal, party, or local privileges. And although I felt myself in the very focus of that influence, which is so unwisely, and so much against its true interest, operating ruin and destruction in Ireland, yet I have no small satisfaction in reflecting, that the business transacted in the group of legislators in the Elysium, goes all the length of the remedy for the disorders of Ireland, the application of which remedy has been so long desired, prayed for, and hoped for. Were our legislators to consult their justice, their humanity, and the general interests of the empire, by adopting this remedy in time, were they once more to send over Lord Fitzwilliam, and sincerely and honestly permit him to finish what he had so gloriously begun, there can be no doubt of its salutary effects in removing every evil. However, whether they may choose to adopt it or not, there it is, forming the business of my principal group of Legislators in Elysium ; and as a man can speak with confidence of the devices of his own heart, most assuredly introduced with the best, most honest intentions, and with the highest refer-

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ence to the good order, melioration, and happiness of society.

As the concerns of art, and the attempt to apply it more immediately (to use Bacon's phrase) to our business and bosoms, are strictly in unison with the views of the Dilettanti Society, there needs no apology for this mention of my own work, as it unavoidably followed from stating that reform in the plan of study of the Carracci, which Annibal begun on his coming to Rome, which Mr. Hufsey was disappointed in his endeavours to introduce into England, and which, for want of a better, came into my hands. I shall therefore, go on with the matter I was upon, by observing, that as the picture of Elysium, and its companion, the Victors at Olympia, were each forty-two feet in length, and the prints I had made of them were only three feet long, in order to be comprehended in a single sheet of paper, the details of the work, reduced to so small a compass, were unavoidably liable to be overlooked; and having another reason, besides this*, for making a separate print of this group of the Legislators in Elysium, where,
from

* This reason was, the desire of rectifying a mistake I was induced to commit in the group of legislators, by following Montesquieu, and other writers, respecting the person to whom civil society is indebted, for first setting the glorious example of establishing equal laws, civil and religious. The reader will find this matter stated at some length, in a printed Letter which I addressed to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, in 1793.

from the enlarged size of the figures, the details would become more apparent, I have been since induced to add three prints of other groups in the same enlarged size; one, the group of Diagoras and his Sons, from the picture of the Victors at Olympia. These Diagorides afford a subject of such peculiar felicity for a group in sculpture, that I have often complimented myself by supposing that there must have been (notwithstanding the silence of Pausanias) something like this of mine, set up in the Altis at Olympia; the characters of the men in their different stages of life—father, sons, and grandsons, such a race of heroes, where the naked occurred with such peculiar propriety, and so gloriously connected with ethics, with all the duties of the good citizen, that I can recollect nothing remaining of the ancients, where the subject matter is more exemplary, more impregnated with that onction, spirit, and *venustas*, which are the inseparable characteristics of Grecian genius. The other two are, one the colloquial, adjoining group to that of the Legislators in the Elysium, consisting of the sextumvirate; to which Swift says, all ages of the world have not been able to add a seventh, where Socrates is proving something to Epaminondas, Cato, the younger and the elder Brutus, and Sir Thomas More. As the effigies of Brutus, and those other generous advocates for civil liberty, have lately been much

fought after, and even in the midst of this mighty struggle which is still agitating Europe, I am happy to reflect, that in the print of this group of the heroes of civil liberty, what is passing in the back-ground, where angels are presenting and interceding for the imperfect Legislators, Bruhma, Confucius, and Mango Capae, tends to shew where all the various talents which insure beatitude centre, and that virtue and all those generous qualities that reflect such lustre and true glory on the character of the good citizen, are but emanations from the higher principle of religion, and piety to God (the sovereign good, the essence of perfection, whose law is rectitude), where all the virtues root. Alas ! how much mistaken are those writers who would expect this branch of civil liberty to flourish, separated and cut off from the nutriment it derives from this root ! Trying occasions, terrors, allurements, and the selfishness inseparable from our nature, fairly considered, what motives to action, or forbearance, can stimulate the man whose views terminate with his existence here ?

It is impossible to conceive any thing more completely above, and disconnected with all human modes of government, than the Christian religion. Genuine Christianity is nothing more nor less than the most complete conceivable morality, offered and recommended by the most persuasive of all conceivable motives ; and if Christianity can be supposed to predispose men to a predilection for
any

any particular mode of government, it must be that of the greatest conceivable freedom, like that of the Quakers, and the difference between the Quakers and the other religious orders of St. Benedict, St. Francis, &c. is less than is vulgarly imagined; a very slight alteration, in one or two particulars, and they are the same. D'Alembert, Diderot, and other great men, may have (and with a good conscience too) done every thing in their power to discredit and to destroy the wretched appearance, under the name of religion, which, like a stalking-horse, fabricated and held up for political state purposes, by the Jesuit Tellier, the Cardinals Bissi and Du Bois, and their odious corrupt confederates, during the years of the dotage of Lewis XIV. and the worthless, dissipated Regent, his immediate successor. Christianity could have no concern here; and it is a shame for any man not to know and acknowledge, that all the Parliaments of France, all the men of conscience, true honour and probity, the Daguesseau, Fleury's, Noailles, and the long and glorious *et cætera*, who were overwhelmed by this state religious mockery, had, notwithstanding, previously manifested their execration of the deception, and left such a stigma of infamy upon it, that it was, almost immediately after, hunted down with ease by the philosophers, to whom this patriotic task devolved. This surely, and no other, can be the reason for the little temporary credit

given to atheistical opinions, as a battery for immediate use, the better to enable them to demolish this state engine of mock religion, no less injurious to the genuine, generous character of Christianity, than to the virtuous freedom, peace, and happiness of civil society. But as that work is now done, there is no longer any occasion for that atheistical battery; for, it is to be hoped, no man can be weak enough to believe, or to endeavour to make others believe, that the chilling torpors of Atheism, like the horrid, inert, deadly silence of the polar regions, can be of any use, or ever coalesce with the generous ardors of a state of liberty, and civil freedom, founded as it always must be, upon all the fraternal charities, the active, energetic, internal virtues of a good heart, which can only be truly known to God, and to a man himself. Well might the amiable and admirable Fenelon say, *That it is impossible to point out a man's true and personal character from his wit, profession, art, or education and learning; whereas we give an infallible definition of him, by mentioning his virtue and inward uprightness, when we have solid proofs of them.* And it might be affirmed, with the most secure confidence, that any philosophers or citizens, of the most free and well-ordered government in the world, could no where find a suite of *principles* so aptly and cogently calculated to preserve and to perpetuate those blessings of freedom

freedom and good order (as far as human matters can be preserved and perpetuated) than those charities which are enumerated in the 13th Chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians ; even the whole of the illustrious comments on this truly citizen-like passage, by the ever-venerable Archbishop just mentioned, would, treasured up in the memory of a good citizen, be his surest guide through all the social, becoming duties which constitute the felicity of every station. Away, then, with Atheism ! the men of France have wisely and becomingly thrown it aside ; and let us hear no more of it in England : the philosophers but made an occasional use of it, and never intended that any well-ordered society should really be the *dupe* of such a pestilential opinion.

By way of border and ornament to Epaminodas's shield, which, near the feet of M. Brutus closes the circle of this colloquial group, it would come well (particularly as there is no portrait remaining of him) to write the following truly heroic advice, which this Theban General gave his countrymen, to dissuade them from enslaving the Orchomenians : "*A nation* (says he) aspiring to command the Greeks, ought to preserve, by its humanity, what it acquired by its valour." Plato and Aristotle, just behind this group of the sextumvirate, are going towards the group of the most perfect legislators in the other print, at whom Plato is pointing.

pointing. The other print is the group adjoining, where angels are unveiling and explaining a solar system to Newton, Gallileo, Copernicus, and Bacon, whose admiration at what is communicated, intimates how much is reserved for a hereafter, which even the wisest could not otherways have known. In the advanced ground is Thales, Des Cartes and Archimedes, and below them, the Friar, Roger Bacon, and his sagacious and excellent friend, Bishop Grouthead, with his letter to Pope Innocent IV. in his hand. Some friends have wished me to make separate prints, on the same enlarged plan of other groups, in this and the other pictures, which are not without pertinence ; but I am satisfied with what is already done, and will leave the rest to any one who may think it worth his pains. I had hopes these prints would have been done sooner, so as to have enabled me to have given up a couple of months, in the summer, to the retouching of that work at the Adelphi : there are some parts of it which want vigour, and may be very much meliorated ; and I should be very much obliged to any gentleman of the Dilettanti Society, or to any other, who would be so good as to take the pains of communicating to me any remarks to that end, as, with God's blessing, I mean to leave that work as perfect as I can. If ever I could have doubted of the wisdom and eligibility of honestly applying and devoting art to utility

utility and social improvement, such doubt would have been long since satisfied, when I see, and have seen, so many great events daily occurring, which afford an illustrious comment on the truth and efficacy of the principles pursued in that work. With the subject matter of it I am perfectly satisfied, and see nothing to alter, to add, or to take away ; but I am eager and anxious to add more energy to its effect, and to the execution of several parts, and for many reasons I feel happy and fortunate that this had not been done before. I mean then, with God's permission, very shortly to request this indulgence from the Society. What I wish to do will not take up much time, or give any interruption to the course of their business in the room ; and I am their debtor for as much colour as will, I believe, do the business ; it was left, after what I had done, when I was last at work in the room, and I did not think it worth the troubling them by sending it.

Upon a recollection of the ground I have gone over in this Letter, there is no doubt but that many apologies ought to be made, not only for any slovenly neglect, laziness, or inability in the style, and in the arrangement, where things have been flung out in the hurry with which they occurred, but, what is much more to be regretted is, the necessity under which I felt myself, of handling freely many matters which unfortunately lay too

directly in my way, to pass them by without notice. I must, however, rely upon the generous feelings and candour of my readers, as (if I know myself) I certainly have nothing to apologize for as to any want of rectitude in my intentions. Superior, I hope, to every base motive of malignity or resentment, I have been directed by nothing but a most ardent desire of rendering every service in my power to a profession which has been the constant and unremitting object of my affections, and the source of whatever happiness I have enjoyed. To the glorious memory of my illustrious predecessors, who had prepared so much for my happiness, I felt myself bound by the strongest ties, so that it became a duty incumbent upon me to defend them from any injustice, to the utmost of my power, and to transmit what had devolved from them to me, as little impaired, and with as many advantages as I could obtain for those who were to come after me. Nothing can stand higher in the estimation of any man than my profession does in mine. No doubt, many things may be, and are over-rated every day ; but if there be any matter about which men are employed, which is really above our estimation, it is certainly the Art of Painting, fairly and justly considered. The rank ignorance, foolish (yet rash) iconoclastic spirit of some of our would-be reformers, make it necessary to touch a little upon this matter.

Painting

Painting has been, by ingenious writers (who perhaps meant to pay it a compliment), defined to be a silent poem, and Poetry a speaking picture. As precepts, nothing can be more admirably said; but, as definitions, nothing can be more false and inadequate, though very artfully stated, and well calculated to coincide with the predilections and prepossessions of men much engaged in literary pursuits: and others, who are but little concerned with literary matters, are too easily caught by the apparent civility of those definitions, to suspect that the poet Simonides, from whom (if my recollection is right) they came, did, instead of concessions to a rival Art, actually purloin from that rival Art an excellence and honour for the decoration of his own, to which, in truth and justice, it had no pretensions of claim. It is now some years that I have been aware of the injustice of these definitions, by which this master Art, this Art *par excellence*, has been so unfairly, unfeelingly, and artfully, placed below the superior station it ought to fill; and I have, in one of my Lectures in the Academy, had occasion to enter upon this dispute respecting the comparison of Painting with Poetry, and have not scrupled to give the preference and superiority to my own Art; and, in addition to what is there urged, I shall here observe, that Monsieur Bailii was, no doubt, exceedingly right, and that some almost
unknown

unknown people, now buried in the remoteness of antiquity, must, however, have been in possession of a body of very extensive and complete knowledge, of which the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Gen-
töös, and other ancient nations, possessed only the fragments, which Homer, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, and others, brought into Greece.* Ac-
cording

* The actual existence of the ancient people above alluded to, who appear from so many unquestionable vestiges to have been in possession of so much united, completer knowledge, was a fact of which I can have no doubt; but whether they were the same as the Atlantic people, of whom Plato was informed through the channel of the Egyptian Priests, or whether they were the identical Scythian Conquerors to whom Asia paid tribute for 1500 years, until the beginning of the Assyrian Empire, in the time of Ninus, who lived 2200 years before Christ, and, according to Justin, was the first to discontinue the payment of that tribute; and also, whether we are to comprehend in this conquest of Asia, Hindostan and China, as well as Chaldea and Egypt, against which latter nation the war commenced; these questions are not easily answered, although it is easy to see that they allude to matters utterly irreconcilable with our commonly received chronology. This chronology is also contradicted (and with good reason) by many late discoveries respecting the natural history of our globe, so that it must surely be highly criminal any longer to suppose this chronology to be supported and warranted by Divine Revelation, if this also be ill founded.

There is nothing in revealed religion to hinder our admitting the mere fact of the antiquity of the globe to any extent of time. It may, or it may not, have been many times totally melted into that fluid, vitrified mass, for which, according to the weighty opinion of Mr. Pott, its component materials are so aptly calculated in certain situations of heat, and as often frittered and
broken

According to the mythology of the Greeks, the Muses preside over the several departments of poetry, and the other knowledges, as we may find

broken up in other temperatures, and rendered proper for vegetable and animal existence. We have in nature no *data*, nor is there any revelation for fixing the precise time of this beginning, or Genesis, either of the earth itself, or of the vegetable and animal natures which receive their support from it, though they do not seem to have been produced by it; for there has appeared, in no time, any material combinations, or mere elementary natural powers, adequate to the formation of any new species, either animal or vegetable, which might be added to those originally created by the Almighty (whenever that creation was), and which have been co-existent ever since: and the writer, whoever he was, of the venerable book at the head of the Old Testament, which bears the name of Genesis, has fixed no time for that production, but used the words "in the beginning" applicable to any time, although he has according to the beautiful ancient usage of allegory, represented this Almighty *fiat* of instantaneous creation, into the detailed and separate acts of six days, perhaps the better to impress upon our minds the necessity and beneficence of this Almighty agency, and so to commemorate it upon every seventh day, through all succeeding time, as to preserve us from the rash folly of seeking any other and material cause, which could have no reference to that moral and social perfection upon which our happiness depended. As to the historical and chronological accounts of the Jewish nation, how far they may have been well or ill preserved, before, or even long after, the Revelation to Moses, this is a curious and interesting question, but of mere human matters of fact, which do not, or cannot affect the verity of revealed religion, under either dispensation. In a long course of ancient history, like that of the Jewish nation, many matters of mere human concern (very interesting to the writer, and to his countrymen) were, from inattention, indiscreet zeal, passion, interest, prejudice, and other human

find detailed in every writer treating of these matters, from Hesiod and Homer, down to the present times. But to Minerva, which is the abstract idea, or personification, and the very
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human infirmities, liable to be confounded and mixed with sacred matters, when the mention of these matters might incidentally occur in historical relations, where Revelation was not necessary. In such a mixture of divine and human affairs, which compose a great part of the Old Testament in its present (always venerable, though probably very imperfect and mutilated) state, transmitted as it has been in a course of so many ages, and such various scenes of national distress and calamity, it is no wonder then, if weak and unwary readers, amidst all the difficulties of discriminating, should stumble at many other rugged matters, besides those of chronology. And thus the indiscriminate rash zeal of weak friends cannot fail of being encountered by something at least equally mischievous from the contemptuous precipitation of foes; and the most sacred matters are equally injured, whether mere human concerns are indiscreetly raised to the pinnacle of divine truths, or whether those divine truths are rashly lowered to the mere ordinary level of human affairs, governed by passion and interests. It is much to be regretted, that the most interesting, most useful, most extensively luminous, as well as the most venerable body of ancient knowledge now in the world (which after all it most undoubtedly is), should not be more usefully and less dangerously employed. Nothing can be more happily calculated to meet, and to remedy all these evils, than the wise, valuable dissertations and notes which accompany Doctor Geddes's vigorous, most accomplished Translation of the Bible, a good part of which has been published in 1792; and the remainder, I am happy to hear, is in great forwardness. Such a work as this of Dr. Geddes, though so long and so ardently desired, could not, before the present century, have made its appearance with so many accumulated advantages from all the various quarters of the knowledge so peculiarly essential to its efficacy.

identity of the wisdom of Jove, what is the art over which she was supposed to preside? This question is answered by the universal testimony of all; and we find, that the employment for which Minerva is peculiarly distinguished from all the celestial personages, is her skill in the labours of the loom, or in other words, that she will convey the idea of the ancients more properly, that she was sovereignly skilful in the art of painting in tapestry, and could employ that universal language of forms, both actual and possible, to all the grand ethical purposes of information, persuasion and instruction. But the Art of Painting is debased by the complaisance of calling it a language. It is a mode of communication as much superior to language, as the image of any thing in a looking-glass is more satisfactory and superior to any mere account of the same thing in words. It is difficult, and would lead us into the depths of philosophy, to say, what is the difference between any actual thing and its image in a glass; and yet so much only, and no more, can be the difference between that actual thing and its representation in painting. In the former case, the difference, perhaps, consists in the mere actuality, and yet, even that may be doubted, as they are both equally actual to the sense of seeing in a third spectator; but the object painted is equally permanent with what we may call the actual or real one. The truth

truth is, that they are all pictures alike, painted equally on the retina or optical sensorium.—But to come back to Minerva: her art can even do still more; it can, by new moulding, and different arrangement of the actual, the created objects, call to our view as in a *speculum*, that still higher order of a new creation, where those objects, sublimated and purged from all dross and alloy, appear before us in *gala*, in all conceivable and possible splendor. This was an Art indeed, and the ancients were well justified in placing it above the reach of Calliope and her sister Muses; and, by a happy effort of that admirable, wonderful penetration, which, when rightly understood, is found to be the usual characteristic of all their knowledge, they therefore, necessarily, wisely and justly, reserved this Master Art, this Art *par excellence*, to employ the more adequate exertions and skill of the mistress of all, of Minerva, or Wisdom herself. Can any man then hesitate to acknowledge, but that the Ancients, by appropriating this art to Minerva, intended to shew the superiority of that pursuit which employs and exhibits things instead of words, or the mere names of those things? a task which implies so small a portion of knowledge and skill as does not deserve to be named, much less compared with the other. Painting then is the real art of wisdom, and Poetry is only an account or relation
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of it, more or less animated as the poetry is more or less excellent. Although this tapestry-work, which (as to the instruments and materials employed in it) was a more laborious and less perfect mode of imitation, does actually and necessarily pre-suppose antecedent exemplars, executed with instruments and materials more manageable, facile, and better adapted to follow with rapidity, the divine *flatus* of the imagination, yet, as I have had occasion to observe in my Lecture in the Academy, from Homer's silence, as to this antecedent art, of which the tapestry-weaving so frequently mentioned, is only, and can be nothing else, but a mere fragment and vestige, we again find ourselves, in this instance, as in so many others, obliged to have recourse to some more ancient people, where all these knowledges existed together in a more complete and united state. It is not, I hope necessary to observe, that by the skilful labours of the loom the ancients always understood the art of making pictures in tapestry, and that the perfection of those pictures, the happiness of their imitation, and the admirable ethical application, are the fine qualities always alluded to (see the story of Penelope, Arachne, &c.) and not any delicacy or perfection in the texture, stuff, or materials employed, as every one in the least conversant with ancient reading must well know all this. Thus it appears, that
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the conclusion I have above insisted on, viz. the superiority of Painting over Poetry, and which I have been insensibly led to, by the mature consideration of so many facts, was a conclusion long since made, and thus beautifully illustrated with all the *venustas* and unction of the ancients themselves, in their very mythology, although it has escaped (for any thing I know to the contrary) the observation and researches of all the commentators, and of those writers whose opinions I had undertaken to refute. It is then evident, that, not the merely copying of actual, casual, ordinary nature, but the new moulding and imitation of it, as it might possibly be combined, according to the more perfect and wiser views of completeness, utility, and ethical adaption, was the true reason why the ancients placed this art in the hands of Minerva herself. Since this alone appears to be the difference between her work and that of Arachne, and therefore our conclusion of the superiority of Painting over Poetry, is, by the highest authority, established, not only with all desirable amplitude and cogency, but also with an additional, most pertinent illustration and confirmation of the truth of that principle of wise selection in all the constituent parts of painting, and that ethical adaptation of it, as a totality which form the very *substratum* and essence of my Lectures to the Students of the Academy. Nothing can be
more

more noble, or more just, than these principles; and it is only to be regretted that they have not a better advocate, more adequate to the dignity of the undertaking; and happily supplied with the necessary materials for observation, which I had almost said, had been designedly withheld from me, as much as influence and combination could withhold them: however, the intention and the attempt must satisfy me; if happily I can leave something to this end, though but in outline, merely sketched out, it may be hereafter filled up, and gracefully finished by some person more fortunately circumstanced.

A further elucidation of this allegory of Minerva appears from her breast-plate, or defence of the vital parts, which is a large serpent's skin, hanging from her right shoulder across her breast, and passing over the heart to her left side, where it turns round under her arm as a broad-sword belt or baudrier, in the ancient mode, when the weapon hung high. The edges of this skin appear bordered with smaller living, and, as it were, embryo serpents, twirling about different ways; but upon a more attentive inspection they are found to be only the several necks and heads of the great serpent, whose skin is thus wrapped round Minerva; and there is generally on the top of her helmet an entire serpent, as it were, couchant, and just launching, according to the direction of

Minerva's head, as appears in the fine antique colossal head at the Marquis of Lansdown's, and many others. Now, as Minerva is the personification of mind, or rather of the sovereign mind, and issuing full formed from the head of Jove himself, if we suppose these serpents to represent thoughts or acts of the mind, the mystical sense becomes apparent in a most beautiful and forcible manner, even to the very circumstance of the heart and head, where thoughts are first conceived, and sent up to be matured for use. This solution, so happily correspondent in all its parts, like most other cases of the discovery of any particular leading fact in aggregate masses of knowledge, affords day-light and satisfaction in unfolding some perplexing difficulties, widely extended through those vestiges of art which remain of the most ancient nations, and the oblations to the serpent, so frequently found amongst the Egyptian antiquities : the small serpent on the heads of Isis and Osiris, and between the horns of Apis, the Serapis, or the large serpent with a human head, become so many manifestations of their being Theists, worshippers of the sovereign mind or intellect ; and poor Cadmus, and his wife Harmonia, or Hermione, whose transformation into serpents was a melancholy punishment, for which, as a school-boy (when reading Ovid), I could see no justice or reason. But if we consider him and his old and amiable com-

companion as dissolving (according to this explanation) into pure intellect, it will then become an apotheosis, or at least a handsome compliment, and a reward more reconcilable with the ideas of even school-boy justice, and well merited by the introducer of literary or alphabetical knowledge into Greece; and Medea's chariot, drawn by dragons or winged serpents, also becomes a chariot carried forward by the winged intellect of this illustrious forcerefs; also the traditionary mystical relation of the origin of the Scythians, respecting the woman or forcerefs, with her lower limbs terminating in two serpents, whom (according to Herodotus) Hercules met at Hylæa is evidently made up of the same leaven.

The serpent with five heads, which so frequently occurs in the Hindoo antiquities, and of which Mr. Townley has a most complete specimen in bronze, and employed with the most decisive signification, where the figure of Bruhma is represented as lying at rest in eternity, within the circular, or rather elliptical space formed by the coils of this serpent, whose five heads rise and hang over in a state of watchfulness. This apparent inaction or eternal rest of the Supreme Power, whilst the all-sovereign wisdom or intellect is in a state of waking and watchfulness, is happily expressed with the utmost depth and perspicuity. How completely does it

exclude every thing illicit, heterodox, and tending to any of the dangerous modifications of Spinosism, old or new ! Whether the universe be considered as the garment, or elegant Virgilian tenement of this *anima mundi*, sleeping as it were in the very energy and perfection of its action, and, to use a very familiar image, like the well-whipped sleeping top of a school-boy, which, from the rapidity of its motion, appears perfectly at rest ; or whether we suppose it to denote resting in that portion of eternity before the energy of creation ; yet that eternal object of love and veneration, the Almighty intellect, the adorable *I am*, which was, is, and will be, is thus ingeniously and happily represented in this specimen of Hindoo art, as ever awake, watchful, conscious, and distinct from all modifications of matter. As to the picturesque licence (vulgarly called poetical) of giving five heads to this serpent (which generally is of the hooded, or *cobra capella* kind) whilst in this state of watchful superintendence, like the dragon at Colchos, or in the Hesperian garden ; —whether by this licence it was (still farther) intended to denote the five organs of sensations, by which the mind, or internal inhabitant, receives every species of the various information respecting all the surrounding exterior objects, it is remarkable, that as we have had but those five organs, the number of heads, always the same, should so exactly

exactly correspond. But whatever might have been intended by taking this liberty with the serpent, of putting five heads on this same body, although it may be as little warranted by the natural history of this animal, as the licence taken with human nature, of giving a hundred hands to Briareus; yet there are many reasons why this liberty is not so shocking in the former as in the latter case. Laying aside the mystical, and considering the mischievous and dreadful power of the serpent, probability is not offended by the seven-headed Hydra of Lerna, or the five-headed Covra Capella of the Hindoos. Perhaps this, or something similar, might be the best representation of the Hindostan idea of the divine power in its destroying agency, like that terrible image with so many teeth in the Bagvat Geta, swallowing whole armies and nations. But good taste must be for ever offended with any such licentious indulgence, in any representations where human nature is concerned.—But to come back to Minerva: if, together with the remarkable inscription on her temple, at Sais in Egypt, “ *I am whatever was, is, and will be, and my vail no mortal hath raised,*” we add the observation, which occurs in the same tract of Isis and Osiris, where Plutarch, speaking of the animals which were supposed to denote and accompany the ideas of the several celestial personages, the dove Venus,

the serpent Minerva, &c. ; and also the information to be gathered from the Greek statues and bas-reliefs ; Minerva then, in all the different ways in which she is employed, whether as feeding the serpent in the elegant little bas-relief on the triangular altar or pedestal of the famous Barberini Candelabrum (now in the Papal Museum), or in those of Hygeia, or in the Minerva at the Justiniani, &c. with the large serpent at her feet, and raising its head at her side (similar, perhaps, to that of Phidias at Athens, of which there is a slight account in Pausanias) ; but she is always so enveloped with this breast-plate, or broad belt of the living skin of this many headed serpent, as to denote the same identity with the serpent itself, according to the more elegant, *gustofo*, Grecian mode of rendering the same old idea of the Gentoos and Egyptians ;—it does appear then, that the circle formed by the serpent with his tail in his mouth, which was supposed to denote eternity, has still much more in it, and was actually intended to typify the eternity of the supreme mind or intellect : and the serpent enveloping the globe, or the mundane egg, its involutions round the Hindostan lingham, or playing round the Greek seven-stringed lyre of Apollo. How important are these lessons, and how admirably and gracefully conveyed !

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This ancient association of ideas, which connect wisdom with the serpent, made its way down to the very promulgation of Christianity, where it is recommended to connect the wisdom of the serpent, with the innocence of the dove; and the serpent, in the beautiful allegorical or mystical representation respecting the state of innocence, is denominated the subtlest beast of the field. Were we to examine this matter in another way; the old serpent, the great dragon with hideous Cerberean heads, who, after having spread its pestilential infections far and wide, is chained down by the angel in the Revelations, how happily does it pourtray the self-importance, pride, and malignant, though impotent enterprizes of the creature, rebelling against his Almighty Creator, and impiously abusing his allotted portion of intellect in the reprobate atheistical barkings, and perverse, hellish yells of those doctrines of materialism, which with such a mischievous, hateful industry, is, in the true spirit of Anti-Christ, attempted to be obtruded on the world, under the specious much-abused name of philosophy! However, God forbid that our horror and hatred of the doctrine should be extended to the men who possess it! their state of mind, whether arising from restiveness, vanity, or mistaken calculation, is comfortless and gloomy enough, without any further addition from the want

of kindness and charity in their fellow men : their opinions ought to be left to God and themselves, which I hope, in future, will ever be the case ; and that they will themselves endeavour generously to make the basis of citizenship as broad as may be, and give every encouragement and example to this pacific disposition, by adopting such a temper, and even toleration, in the management of their disputes, as will comport better with the necessary, social charities. Their information does by no means entitle them to assume so many magisterial airs of supercilious contempt for their believing opponents : it would better become them to be more sparing of uncivil, offensive epithets ; superstition, bigotry, or ignorance, need not be flung so liberally and indiscriminately on all religious belief whatever, so as to include a Socrates, a Plato, a Bacon, a Fenelon, Milton, or Locke, Boerhaave, Grotius, and many such. Alas ! it is very certain that the most hopeless and unmanageable of atheistical disputants would be the man of least information respecting all that beauty, order, and wise, admirable adaptation, which constitute the phænomena of the natural and moral world ; and it is to be lamented, that but few men are likely to feel themselves disposed to afford the necessary time or patience for communicating the previous information, upon which the subsequent conviction of such a would-be philosopher, must be

be founded. Humility is a Christian virtue, of no small utility in the numerous classes where enquiry cannot be conveniently pursued.

If any one should start a query, why the ancients, who reasoned so deeply, should, in their personifications of the sovereign wisdom, have chosen Minerva a female; why the Muses, who preside over the several subordinate modes of intelligence, &c. are all females; and why the conversation of the serpent was held with Eve, in order that her influence might be employed in persuading Adam; such queries could have been well and pertinently answered, by the eloquent, generous, amiable sensibility of the celebrated and long-to-be-lamented Mary Wolstonecraft, and would interweave very gratefully with another edition of her *Rights of Women*. Her honest heart, so estranged from all selfishness, and which could take so deep and generous an interest in whatever had relation to truth and justice, however remote as to time and place, would find some matter for consolation, in discovering that the ancient nations of the world entertained a very different opinion of female capabilities, from those modern Mahometan, tyrannical, and absurd degrading notions of female nature, at which her indignation was so justly raised. Civil society has many obligations to that excellent woman, and would do well to discharge some of them, by kind attentions to the two female children

children she has left behind her, if ever they should need them, which I am happy to say is not the case at present, nor likely to be so, whilst God Almighty spares the life and health of the ingenious Mr. Godwin, the father of one, and the kind and generous protector of the other.

These observations respecting the patronage and presidency of Minerva in our art, have suggested themselves to me in the painting of a work which is now under my hands, and, though very large, makes but part of another work of considerable extension (I pray God I may be suffered to carry it on, and finish it in peace; horrid to think! but let me go on): it is the story of Pandora, or the Heathen Eve, brought into the Assembly of the Gods, preparatory to the sending her down to Epimetheus, her destined husband; where, whilst Pandora is dressing by the attendant Graces, Minerva is discoursing to her on the domestic duties of a wife, with a shuttle in her right hand, and in her left a tapestry robe woven with it, in which is represented, by a few intimations in the enlightened parts of the folds, the story of Jove fulminating the Titans, or the punishment of that pride and arrogance which was likely soon to become apparent in the descendants of our poor Pandora. The moment I came to ask myself, what it was that Minerva was teaching to Pandora, it opened upon me all at once, that she was teach-

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ing her to paint, teaching her an art which was so capable of being made subservient to all the social duties, and where it was impossible to excel in it, without the acquisition of such information, respecting all the concerns and dearest interests of humanity, as could not fail, when joined with the superior sentiment and graces of feminine softness, to become the solace and anodyne against the numberless and unavoidable miseries of life; and as wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, citizens, and above all, as friends, these endearing accomplishments, which would thus attach, could not fail of rendering them the graceful ornaments of all stations. Hurried, as I am, to close this letter, I must, however, here allow myself just to observe, that this matter respecting the utility, propriety, and peculiar adaptation of Minerva's interference in *female education*, coming as it does, with all the recommendations of respectability from such remote antiquity, and through that classical, graceful channel, where civilisation must recognise so many obligations, such a matter as this is most assuredly highly worthy the serious consideration of the females of our islands. Pandora herself, let us suppose what we may, could not possibly have higher pretensions to all the beauties and graces of form, colour, and natural disposition, than many which, according to the confession of all Europe, it is the pride and glory of our mild and genial climate

climate to produce: a race of women better calculated to display the salutary effects of such an education, certainly never existed. It is painful to me to be obliged to censure, and yet it has been my fortune to be much concerned in matters where the performance of this harsh task became a duty, from which I ought not to shrink. I must then, with all becoming submission to my destiny, proceed to state, though as briefly as may be, that our females (of such independent easy means as might place them above drudging, for the necessities of subsistence) would do well, or at least those who are interested in their real advantage, to substitute this art of Minerva, which is connected with so many benefits to themselves, and to every thing connected with them, in lieu of that art of Music, upon which so much female time and attention is wasted, and where, after the greatest, or at least the most important part of life (because it is that part which is devoted to the acquisition of what is to be used and practised upon ever after), where this most important time and attention is employed in the pursuit of the infinitesimal divisions and arrangements of flats and sharps, and a long *et cætera*, altogether unconnected with the acquisition of even one single idea towards the expansion or improvement of either the head or the heart, and which, even after so much labour

labour and application, is likely to leave them nothing better than a mere toy of amusement for tickling the ear, instead of being what they might be, the well-instructed companion and confidential associate, so peculiarly calculated for the communication of many interesting concerns, where a man is likely to want a true friend, if he does not find it in a female, for men have naturally too much *rivalship*, to expect any utility or assistance from them : on certain trying occasions of daily occurrence men never can have the same interests. Nothing could be more wisely and admirably adapted to this most interesting end than female nature, when its education co-operates with that desire and endeavour implanted by its Creator, of recommending itself by the dear heart-felt offices of satisfaction and utility ; or, as the old phrase nobly and pithily words it, of being indeed a helpmate both in body and mind. Even the very faults of women arise from this generous source of sociability, from the efforts to excel each other in pleasing, and creating a superior interest in the other sex, which appears to be their wish, as well as their destination, at all events ; and the means they are obliged to employ to this end, are generally well adapted, and in unison with the dispositions on which they were intended to operate. Indeed their endeavour is generally and generously to outdo and go even further than the male,

male, in the object of his own wishes, whatever it may be. Hence it is, that the wife of a cheating shopkeeper or dealer, is generally a greater, or more complete cheat than her husband : the women attaching to a camp, a banditti, or a horde of Indians, are (merely to recommend themselves) generally more refined in cruelty than the men : and as a few exceptions cannot prevent the admission of general truths, so we might well expect to find the wife of a Phocion, Brutus, Barneveldt, Grotius, and Roland, so much of a texture with their excellent husbands. And I will, from the memoirs relating to the Archhishop of Paris, Cardinal de Noailles, one of the last glorious assertors of the few Gallican liberties then surviving, add the following passage (well worthy remarking) respecting that admirable, excellent man, Daguesseau, the Procureur General of France, who, when he was obliged to go into the King's presence at Versailles, August 11, 1714, with the alternative before him, either to sacrifice his conscience and duty, by an acquiescence with the Royal despotic Declaration, or incurring the King's displeasure by refusing it : “ Avant que de
 “ partir, il dit adieu à la Procureuse Générale, &
 “ lui fit sentir qu'il ne sçavoit pas s'il n'iroit point
 “ coucher à la Bastille ; mais sans être étonnée de ce
 “ discours, & sans s'attendrir sur le sort d'un
 “ époux qui lui est si cher, elle lui répondit avec
 “ courage :

“ courage : *Allez, Monsieur, & agissez comme si*
 “ *vous n’aviez ni femme ni enfans ; j’aime infiniment*
 “ *mieux vous voir conduire avec honneur à la Bastille*
 “ *que de vous voir revenir ici déshonoré.*” I have
 much pleasure in believing that I know some
 women who could equal all the dignity of Madame
 Daguesseau’s admirable conduct, had their hus-
 bands (if in similar circumstances) the magnani-
 mity to furnish the occasion. With such a coad-
 jutor at a man’s elbow, how patiently, serenely,
 and, I had almost said, good-humouredly, might
 he not pass through any storms ! how little could
 the envy or malignity of any combinations affect
 him !

It is much to be wished that the illustrious ex-
 ample of female education at Windsor, which has
 been attended with such grateful fruits in the many
 interesting and universally acknowledged accom-
 plishments of our amiable *Princesses*, was more
 imitated than it has been by all parents, after her
 most gracious Majesty the *Queen* had held out to
 them a specimen so exemplary and successful. I
 am happy to have long since taken such notice of
 this wise, graceful specimen of female education,
 as to have interwoven it with my work on the ne-
 cessity of human culture, at the Adelphi, as appears
 from my sketch for the space in the centres, over the
 fire-places, which accompanied the prints of that
 work, published in May, 1791 : and I could not re-
 fuse

fuse myself the pleasure of recognizing that incident of justice to *her Majesty's* most sagacious conduct upon an occasion where the very important business of female education again occurred to my observation. I am glad to have arrived at the end of my letter; it has gotten immoderately long, and has tired even myself: but still, as the respectable name of Sir Joshua Reynolds has so frequently occurred in it, a name interesting to the Art and to the Nation, and in which you had more than a participation of the common property; as he was a Member of your Society, it will very well coincide with the publicity of our views, to mention his name again, and to transcribe here a few observations upon the character of his works, which I took occasion to mention in the Academy (just after his death), under a hope of inducing that body to set on foot a subscription for erecting a monument to his memory. It came in at the conclusion of my Lecture on Colouring, and was as follows:

“ A just attention to the admirable principles of chiaro-scuro and colouring, discoverable in the fine works of Titian, Rubens, Rembrandt, and Vandyck, must, more than any thing, lead us to reflect upon the great loss this Academy has sustained by the death of its late illustrious President. In this very important part of the Art, Sir Joshua Reynolds was singularly excellent; and we might call to our recollection many of his works which
 have

have been exhibited on these walls, that may be ranked with the finest examples for colouring and chiaro-scuro. For a great part of his life, he was continually employed in the painting of portraits, undoubtedly because there was no demand in the country for any thing else, as the public taste had been formed to this by the long line of the Hudsons, Highmores, Jervoices and Knellers, who had preceded him, and whose works sufficiently testify, from what a wretched state Sir Joshua raised this branch of the art, and how vigorous, graceful, and interesting it became, by the masterly way in which he treated it. In many of Titian's portraits, the head and hands are mere staring, lightish spots, unconnected with either the drapery or back ground, which are sometimes too dark, and mere obscure nothings: and in Lely, and even in Vandyck, we sometimes meet with the other extreme, of too little solidity, too much flicker and washiness. Sir Joshua's object appears to have been, to obtain the vigour and solidity of the one, and the bustle and spirit of the other, without the excesses of either, and in by far the greatest part of his portraits he has admirably succeeded. His portrait of Mrs. Siddons is, both for the ideal and executive, the finest picture of the kind, perhaps, in the world; indeed, it is something more than portrait, and may serve to give an excellent idea of what an enthusiastic mind is apt to conceive

of those pictures of confined history, for which Appelles was so celebrated by the ancient writers. But this picture of Mrs. Siddons, or the Tragic Muse, was painted not long since, when much of his attention had been turned to history ; and it is highly probable that the picture of Lord Heathfield, the glorious defender of Gibraltar, would have been of equal importance, had it been a whole length ; but even as it is, only a bust, yet there is great animation, and a spirit happily adapted to the indications of the tremendous scene around him, and to the admirable circumstance of the key of the fortress, firmly grasped in his hands, than which imagination cannot conceive any thing more ingenious, and heroically characteristic.

It is, perhaps, owing to the Academy, and to his situation in it, to the discourses which he bienrially made to the pupils upon the great principles of Historical Art, and the generous ardour of his own mind, to realise what he advised—to these alone (and not to any prospect of patronage or of great emolument) we are indebted for a few expansive efforts of colouring and chiaro-scuro, that would do honour to the first names in the records of Art. Nothing can exceed the brilliancy of light, the force and vigorous effect of his picture of the Infant Hercules strangling the serpents : it possesses all that we look for, and are accustomed to
admire

admire in Rembrandt, united to beautiful forms, and an elevation of mind, to which Rembrandt had no pretensions. The prophetic agitation of Tiresias and Juno, enveloped with clouds, hanging over the scene, like a black pestilence, can never be too much admired, and are indeed truly sublime. It is very much to be regretted, that this picture is in the hands of strangers, at a great distance from the lesser works of Sir Joshua, as it would communicate great value and *éclat* to them. What a becoming, graceful ornament it would be in one of the halls of the City of London! But from an unhappy combination of evils, generally attendant upon human affairs (particularly on those which, from their superior importance, are likely to excite much attention), there is, and almost always has been, occasion to lament, that nearly nine out of ten of those great opportunities of the exertions of Art have been little better than thrown away. When a great corporation, or any other great employer, are willing to bestow attention upon Art, and expend largely for the gratification of the public taste in this way, there is then done all that can fairly be expected from them; but whether this shall be well or ill directed, is very fortuitous, and, as Fenelon, and all men of observation tell us, will depend greatly upon such tricks, artifices and scrambling, as must bring it more within the reach of meanness and cunning, from whom little

can be expected, than of that elevation of soul, and important ability, that alone could do adequate honour to the undertaking. The great employer is the greatest (I had almost said the only) loser, when he does not fortunately light upon an artist at par with the undertaking: the labours of ignorance can be the vehicle of nothing creditable with posterity: the good favour of the employers, or the greatness of the undertaking, cannot give such an artist the necessary requisites. Although then there is no reasonable ground for blame or censure, yet there is much for regret and concern, as these combinations of artifice on the one side, and mistake on the other, are so often inseparable concomitants in the concerns of Art. A very striking instance of this unlucky combination happened not long since in a sister kingdom, where it appears that the Viceroy, and all the chief personages of the country, were so far infatuated, as to throw away their countenance and attention upon a large historical picture, painted by an engraver, which was to be a glorious record and commemoration of a great kingdom, of a new Order of Knighthood, and of St. Patrick, the patron of both. How such an artist could, in an enlightened age, and in the face of a Royal Academy, muster up the necessary effrontery for such an undertaking, and expect, and really find so much support in it, is a matter of real astonishment.

Nothing

Nothing could be more fatal, than that the Students of the Academy should ever be deluded into the notion, that there are any short cuts to be found, by which the ends of Art may be obtained, without all that long and previous education and labour that have been heretofore judged so necessary. The rejection of all the drawings for the Academy Figure, at the last contention for the Medals, * which never happened before, would

* In the above-mentioned rejection of all the drawings of the Academy Figure, offered by the students in their competition for that silver medal, the fault, from whatever cause, must rest with the students themselves, as every necessary assistance towards drawing from the *living model* was liberally provided for them in the Academy. Under a hope that our institution may be furnished with a similar exculpation, in the higher, most important concern of all, respecting that gold medal, which is the prize of painting, and the last seal of the Academy set to the abilities of the students, before they are sent into foreign countries, it may be to the purpose to insert here the following observations, with which I thought it necessary to conclude my first lecture, a fortnight since, January 1, 1793; they arose from another melancholy disgraceful fact, which affords additional proof of the absolute necessity for that public collection of pictures, for the formation of our young painters, of which so much has been said in the above letter. The observations follow :

“ Young Gentlemen, it must be a matter of most serious concern to every one who has any feeling for the national character, for its glory, or its disgrace, to call up the recollection of what happened in this room at our last meeting a month since, on the 10th of December. At that meeting, which was called for the distribution of the Prizes, I am ashamed to say, there was no medal given for painting; and further, that, preparatory to that meeting, I was of the same opinion with all the other acadé-

would incline one to think, that some of the students are in too great a hurry, and wish to appear
at

micians, that the pictures which were sent by the candidates for the prize of painting, did not any of them deserve the medal, and ought to be, and were accordingly voted out of the room, so as that they might not be seen by the public on the day of the distribution of the prizes.

“ Under a hope that this might never happen again, I thought it necessary to propose to the Academy to adopt two regulations to operate henceforward : one, that all future candidates for the prize in painting, be required to send some picture of their performance, to be inspected by the Academy, in order to obtain its consent to their becoming candidates for that medal ; the other law was, that their performances should be sent without any outside frame, in order to save the candidates from any unnecessary expence : and I am happy to inform you that the Academy thought with me, and adopted both those regulations. I do not, Gentlemen, mention this vexatious fact of the rejection of those pictures, as a matter of any blame to you. No, no, far from it ; the fault lies not with you, but with the institution itself, which unreasonably, cruelly requires from you, what it does not furnish you with the means of performing. The Academy, at present, is but a drawing-school, no more ; and although it holds out the temptation of a gold medal, inviting you to paint, yet it does not provide you with any authorised, legitimate exemplars, for the study of painting. You can all bear witness how long and zealously I have been labouring to obtain for you this necessary decisive assistance, without which your time and application will be cruelly and wickedly wasted, without utility or credit to the public, and with extreme injustice and injury to you : this assistance would even have supplied all that was wanting in the performance of those pictures rejected last month, which were not defective in point of genius. I have however one hope yet remaining, from a matter which is now in the press, where I have brought together every thing that occurred to me, as likely to induce *his Majesty*
graciously

at the end as cheaply as possible. Although this be too much the character of the age we live in, yet it ought to be hoped that the students, young men, with time before them, would heartily despise it, and learn to think more generously ; they, I persuade myself, were led into that precipitation, by a late regulation, regarding the duration of study, but which has been since done away : to this we shall ascribe it, and not to any want of modesty in the students. They will let no examples of any seeming temporary success prevail with them, to have any reliance on whatever may be obtained

graciously to extricate the Academy from this vexatious dilemma, which it is in his power to do, with much ease, no expence, and great glory, both to himself and the nation. It is a Letter to the Dilettanti Society, respecting the obtention of certain matters essentially necessary for the improvement of the public taste, and for accomplishing the original views of the Royal Academy of Great Britain ; leaving to the wisdom and discretion of the Dilettanti Society, the proper mode of forwarding it to *the King*. And as I had no personal end of interest, and nothing in view but your necessary service and advancement, the reputation of the Academy, and the ultimate glory of the King and Country, I have allowed myself all the latitude of that manly and free discussion the nature of the case so pressingly required. Adulation could be of no use with either the King or the Public ; there has been already but too much of it, by which both have been grievously abused and misled. The friendly physician, who aims to do good, and to save, will, in many cases, feel himself obliged to withhold mollients, until they can be safely indulged after the gangrene has been done away by the necessary caustic remedies."

obtained by the disingenuous arts of cabal and intrigue; they will remember, that

“ Painful and slow, to noble Arts we rise,

“ And long, long labours, wait the glorious prize.”

Let it be the happiness of the students, that this is the fact, that the acquisition of Art requires much time and great labour; this it is that will secure to themselves, all that is valuable in their Art, free from the invasions of vain people of rank and fortune, who, though they may be inclined to dabble, and may sometimes obtain medals and little distinctions from other societies, yet will never bestow the necessary labour in the previous studies, which only can enable them ultimately to produce what is worthy of Art. Devote yourselves then generously to an honourable procedure, with a hearty contempt for all low cunning and short cuts; detest all clubs, and occasions of cabal their prime object is to level every thing, and give strength to the malignity of ignorance and incapacity, by extensive associations. Go home from the Academy, light your lamps, and exercise yourselves in the creative part of your Art, with Homer, with Livy, and all the great characters, ancient and modern, for your companions and counsellors.

These general reflections, which led us from Sir Joshua, have brought us to him again: the lustre of his character cannot but be profitable to you, in what-

whatever way it be considered. His efforts of the historical kind were all made within the compass of a few years before his death. No student in the Academy could have been more eager for improvement, than he was for the last twelve years ; and the accumulated vigour and value which characterise what he has done within that period, to the very last, could never have been foreseen or expected from what he had done, even at the outset of the Academy, and for some years after. It is to be regretted so much of this earnestness should have been suffered to evaporate, without securing something more for the public. His mind was full of the idea of advancement, and pursuit of the extraordinary and grand of the Art ; he even, in his last discourse, seems to speak slightly of his own pursuits in the Art, and said, that, were he to begin the world again, he would leave all, and imitate the manner of Michael Angelo. But nothing could be more unjust than to take this passage too literally : it is the natural language of a mind full of generous heat, making but little account of what it had attained to, and rapidly in progress to something further. But surely, without either alteration or farther advancement, had it been Sir Joshua's fortune to have lived a little longer, and, whether commissioned or not, had he contrived to have left in this great city some work of the same majesty of effect, vigour, harmony, and

and beauty of colour, the same classical, happy propriety of character and intellectual arrangement, as is conspicuous in his Infant Hercules, the business of his reputation had been completed, and his country would have the satisfaction of shewing a work that, upon a fair balance of excellence and deficiency on both sides, would not shrink from a comparison with the most esteemed works: and you, Young Gentlemen, would be thereby possessed of a great advantage in assisting your studies, particularly in the chiaro-scuro and colouring, in which he was so singularly excellent, and which are so essentially necessary to the perfection of your Art.

We shall long have occasion to remember the literary (I might say classical) talents, which form another part of the character of this great man, gracefully, highly ornamental, and most becoming his situation in this Academy. From the congeniality of mind, which associated him in friendly habits with all the great literary characters of his time, they followed him into this institution; and we have the honour of shewing their names, set like brilliants of the first water, in the ornamental appendages of professors of ancient literature, and other such similar accomplishments associated with the Academy. As to those admirable discourses which he biennially read here, you will, I am sure, have reason to participate with me in the satisfaction of know-

knowing, that, together with the edition of them which is now printing, there will be published, "Observations on the Pictures in Flanders," which Sir Joshua had made during a summer's excursion to that country. How fitted to each other, such a man, and such a work ! Although the time at present will not allow us any further recognition of the many singular merits of this great man, which do so much honour to our institution, and to the nation ; yet, as above all things, we are most interested in the becoming, generous feelings of the heart, it is impossible to withhold myself here from anticipating the exultation with which I shall see the young artists and students coming forward in a body, and with honest ardour petitioning, that a contribution from them be accepted of as a part of a fund for defraying the expence of a monument for this father and ornament of the Academy. The value of such a contribution would be derived from the endearing exemplary circumstance of its coming from them, and not from the sum : it would be beginning life well, and be a kind of pledge and surety for the exercise of the same feelings through their remaining career ; half a crown from each would be better than ten pounds. Such honest, generous intercourse between master and scholar, the dead and the living, cannot be exercised without satisfaction and improvement to their own hearts.

hearts. I speak as if there was a monument to be erected to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds; but, to my astonishment, I have heard of no such matter as yet. The Academy will surely soon wake and rouse itself; it can never suffer that the engravers alone should do themselves and their profession honour by erecting a monument to the memory of Woollet (but it ought to be to Robert Strange). If so much is done in the commemoration of small and subordinate excellence, what ought not the Academy to do, in a matter where themselves, the honour of the Art, and of the Country, are so deeply interested! Originating in the Academy, all the Artists and Dilettanti of the Nation would come forward, and this Royal Institution (which, I trust, will live for ever), founded in the Metropolis of the British Empire, would set out in a noble becoming manner. God forbid that it should ever appear to our successors, in the next generation, that we too have been so devoted to the hellish arts of mean, selfish policy, as to neglect the incumbent duty of transmitting to them an honest, exemplary testimony of our recognition of so much excellence.

Read in the Academy, Feb. 18, 1793.

The essential service rendered to the Art, and to the Public, by the Dilettanti Society, in affording the means of completing that valuable work of

Steward's

Steward's Antiquities of Athens, and also the other excellent work of the Ionian Antiquities, by Messrs. Revet and Chandler, have induced me to hope, that similar good consequences will follow from their patriotic interposition in this other matter, of even still higher importance, respecting a public collection of the exemplars of Art.

With all due consideration, therefore,

I have to the honour to subscribe myself,

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

Your sincere, and most obedient servant;

JAMES BARRY, R. A.

PROFESSOR OF PAINTING TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

Castle-Street, Oxford-Market,

July 25, 1797.

P. S. As it may happen, at some time or other, that your Society, or some Member of it, may think of collecting for the Public, original writings or letters of great Artists, in the manner of that valuable work published at Rome, in 5 vols. quarto, by Monseigneur Bottari; I had thought of inserting here, for the benefit of such a collection, a few letters written by a great man, who would have been much greater, had he lived in a country more advanced, and better fitted to his very extraordinary

traordinary attainments. These letters were written by Mr. Hufsey, famous even from his disappointment, by which the Art and nation have lost so much. But as their insertion would have occasioned too great a delay in the printing, the idea was given up, though with much regret, as I hoped they would be the occasion of bringing to light some other writings, letters, or interesting anecdotes, of this truly great, though unfortunate man, which would give me some reason to claim merit with the public on that account.

A N
A P P E N D I X
TO THE
L E T T E R
TO THE
D I L E T T A N T I S O C I E T Y.

Containing a Continuation of Details of certain Facts which may affect the successful Prosecution of ART in the BRITISH SCHOOL; and which fully explain and comprehend the Matter and Mode of the DISPUTE between the ROYAL ACADEMY and the PROFESSOR of PAINTING, from its Commencement to its Termination.

NEAR the close of the Letter to the Dilettanti Society, in page 73, quarto edition, the reader will find a long note, respecting the distressing situation of the Pupils of the Royal Academy, where, as the Professor lecturing to those Pupils, I had occasion, on Jan. 1, 1798, to advert to the very disgraceful circumstance of the rejection of all the pictures of those Pupils which had been recently

cently offered for the Premium of the Academy ; although at the same time I was candidly obliged to acknowledge in exculpation of those Pupils, that the defects for which their pictures were rejected, manifestly arose more from the want of the necessary assistance of legitimate old pictures, as exemplars for the study of the colouring and mechanical conduct, than from any want of genius, in which it did not appear that those Pupils were any otherways defective, than in the simple circumstance of their misfortune under a defective education, in having this necessary assistance to be derived from old pictures withheld from them ; more especially at that time, when they were seduced, and even hooted from such parts of the old traditional usage of painting as might have reached them, by the very impudent, though very absurd imposture of the pretended Venetian secret, which with so many circumstances of quack-ing was at that time obtruded, or at least attempted to be obtruded upon the public attention.

Convinced as I was of this most important truth, I felt myself bound by every principle of duty to the King, to the Academy, to its Pupils, to the National Honour, and also to my own character and feelings, never to rest in my situation as Professor, nor to let others rest, until this point of obtaining an Academical or Public Collection of Exemplars should be happily effected. The honour of being in some measure instrumental

mental towards the obtaining of this Collection, so replete with public benefit, was my most dear and interesting feeling, and for which my heart was ready to make any personal sacrifice; and although I had been so long, so invidiously and malignantly opposed by an extensive combination, yet I was determined to make one more experiment, which had been as yet untried, and which I had every reason to hope would force my opponents of the cabal to come forward, before the funds of the Academy should be otherways disposed of, and to take some notice of this growing mischief, or of me; more especially, as at worst, it would be impossible for them to strip me of my Professorship and seat as an Academician, without at the same time bringing such notice and general attention on this subject of our difference, as would soon furnish the means of applying the necessary remedy, by exciting the patriotic spirit of some class or other of an intelligent and generous Public; and in which, thanks be to God, my experiment has succeeded beyond any expectation I could have formed. In such a case, the hazard of the sacrifice was the matter of duty, and consequently of glory; and I neither could nor did hesitate to prefer it to the retention of a wretched salary of 30l. a year, annexed to my Professorship, or to the fears of any temporary imputations of disgrace, arising from either imposture, or from the

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giddiness

giddiness and cullibility of those who might be deceived by it. Actuated by this sense of duty, and leaving the consequences to God, I began by laying the whole matter before the King and the Public, in that Letter to the Dilettanti Society, and determined to follow it up by other acts in the same open and fearless manner; and accordingly, a few days after the transaction of Jan. 1, 1798, cited in the note above mentioned, I also took occasion to write the following letter respecting these Academical Transactions, in which it will appear that the interests of superior Art, and the reputation and glory of the British School, are both deeply concerned.

Castle-Street, March 5, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

It was my intention to have called on you this morning, in order to give you, *viva voce*, some account of the business carried on at the Academy last night; but as I have been obliged to wait at home on a matter which could not be dispensed with, I must now be at the trouble of transcribing for your perusal the notes which I made last night, after my return from the meeting at the Academy.—Good God! when will all this scribbling about the cursed intriguing at the Academy be at an end? But no matter, we are in for it, and must therefore go on with patience.

On

On the 28th day of February, 1798, the following letter was sent me from the Academy :

“ SIR,

“ You are desired to meet the President, and
 “ the rest of the Academicians, on Saturday next,
 “ the third day of March, at seven o’clock in
 “ the evening, on particular business.

“ I am, &c.

“ J. RICHARDS, R. A. Sec.”

As nothing was specified by the vague words particular business, my suspicion was excited, that some new attack was intended on the little property of the Academy. At that meeting the business was, a resolution of the Council, adopting a proposal made by the President, which was followed by a motion of Mr. Wyatt, that the Academy should give 500l. in aid to Government at the present crisis. As I well knew this motion would be carried, and had little or no objection to it myself, I was resolved, by concurring in it, to try if the Academy could not be persuaded to blend another matter with it, and good-humouredly, by a vote at the same time of another 500l. for the purchase of some old picture or pictures, for the use of the Students, to make a beginning of that Repository of the Materials for Art, which had been so long the desideratum. After my

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having

having stated that this political call on the Academy for 500l. might be repeated next year, and my difficulty of knowing where it would end, I requested, that before the Academy proceeded any further, they would permit me to read to them a few short observations on the application peculiarly attaching to the nature of that property acquired by the Academy, with a motion founded upon those observations, which I had prepared, and which being but a few lines, would be no great trespass on their time ; and I accordingly read what follows :

“ As the Royal Academy was instituted with the
 “ commendable, patriotic view of giving founda-
 “ tion and efficacy to such a National School of
 “ Art, as would be, if not adequate, at least not
 “ unworthy the high reputation the Empire had
 “ attained to in all other respects.

“ As the funds of the Academy have ever since
 “ its institution, for more than five and twenty
 “ years, been most becomingly, nobly, and pa-
 “ triotically employed in the endeavour of crown-
 “ ing the national reputation, by the happy ad-
 “ dition of this graceful and only remaining orna-
 “ ment :

“ And as the alterations that have recently
 “ taken place in Europe, make it no longer either
 “ practicable or eligible to continue the usage
 “ hitherto adopted by the Academy, of sending
 its

“ its Pupils abroad for the completion of their
 “ education, I have now strong hopes of being
 “ supported with the countenance and concurrence
 “ of the Academy, in *moving* (which I now do),
 “ That of the 14,000l. property the Academy
 “ is possessed of, whatever part of it can be
 “ spared from the necessary uses of the Academy
 “ and from its ordinary charities, as well as from
 “ the extraordinary assistance which I hope will
 “ not be withheld from such of its members as
 “ might be necessitated to apply for it, in this dis-
 “ tressing and calamitous crisis of our affairs. What-
 “ ever can be spared after these necessary atten-
 “ tions, I again *move*, that it be immediately laid
 “ out, by a Committee appointed for the purpose,
 “ in the purchases necessary towards forming such
 “ a Collection of the Materials of Study, as may
 “ be necessary for completing the views of Public
 “ Education in the Arts, as well that of the Pupils
 “ as of the people at large. There will be no use
 “ or need to think impracticably on this occasion,
 “ or that such a collection is wanting as that at the
 “ Louvre, in France ; much less will do ; for as
 “ in other cases, so in this, according to the wise
 “ application of the old adage, perhaps the half
 “ would, for many reasons, be better than the
 “ whole. Assisted with a few sound Examples
 “ in the different Walks of Art, which might be
 “ easily had, I should have no fears, that the
 “ genius

“ genius of our people would need to shrink from
 “ a fair comparison with any thing that the
 “ proudest of our rival neighbours could oppose
 “ to us. I am well aware of the gallantry, high
 “ abilities, and great advantages of our rival
 “ brethren in Arts, on the continent; and yet
 “ my greatest wish would be to see our Artists
 “ fairly engaged with them. Let but the Aca-
 “ demy do its part on the present occasion, by
 “ immediately giving a beginning to this necessary
 “ Storehouse of Materials, and there can be no
 “ doubt but that all Europe would be entertained,
 “ and our rivals themselves not a little benefited,
 “ by the exertion that the desire of keeping pace
 “ with us would naturally occasion. This surely
 “ is the best, most becoming use that can be made
 “ of whatever means may be in the disposal of the
 “ Academy: this would be the proper, the most
 “ effectually Antigallican use that could be made of
 “ those means: and it is but doing an act of mere
 “ justice to our rulers, in supposing that it is
 “ what they expect from us upon the present
 “ occasion. Since our very Premier himself, in
 “ his Bill for the Assessed Taxes, has very wisely
 “ and humanely taken into his consideration the
 “ distressed state of the Artists of our Academy at
 “ this crisis, and accordingly placed them on the
 “ same easy and moderate footing with the keep-
 “ ers of lodging-houses. This indulgence to the
 “ members

“ members of the Academy, this recognition of
 “ their inability to bear any great pecuniary pres-
 “ sure, is not imputed to them by the Minister,
 “ as any derogation from the national importance
 “ of their genius and abilities, as he well knows
 “ that those pecuniary means and these important
 “ merits are not always commensurate. And by
 “ thus immediately and eagerly embracing this
 “ pressing occasion of employing your whole at-
 “ tention and means in furthering those important
 “ national views of Art which have been com-
 “ mitted to your integrity and care, you will give
 “ the Minister the satisfaction of knowing that he
 “ was not mistaken in the good opinion he had
 “ formed of this Academy, which I hope on this
 “ and other occasions will be ever found to place
 “ its true glory in that Artist-like exertion for
 “ the National Reputation, which the King and
 “ People ought naturally to expect from them.”

This motion was made by James Barry, March
 3, 1798.

When I had done reading, Mr. Wyatt asked me
 (across the table), if my intention by the inter-
 vention of this paper, was to set aside the motion
 for the contribution of 500l. aid to Govern-
 ment? My answer was, No; My intention is,
 that they should go together, and that the Aca-
 demy, by thus expending 500l. to give beginning

to a Collection of Pictures, would thus manifest the necessity of the thing, and thereby induce the King and the Public to complete it. However, as no one offered to second my motion, it was necessarily withdrawn, and I accordingly cooperated with the rest in voting the 500l. to Government, without saying any thing more respecting the desired Collection of Exemplars, the Pupils, or the Public. One of the Academicians asked me (in the course of desultory conversation) what I meant by the 14,000l. stated as the funds of the Academy, and whether I did not know, that the Academy at present had no unappropriated fund. Upon enquiry, I find he was in the right, and that these 14,000l. had been disposed of in the pensions to the Academicians, Associates, and their relatives, mentioned in the 14th and 15th pages of my Letter to the Dilettanti Society, quarto edition, although his Majesty's acquiescence and signature confirming that resolution, had, to my certain knowledge, never been notified at the general meeting of the Academy. However, a fashion has obtained lately, of contenting themselves with what is known in the Council, without giving themselves any unnecessary trouble about the General Meeting of the Academicians.

Another particular which also occurred that night, tends to shew how completely this 14,000l. property of the Academy is alienated from any
other

other application of it than to the mere pension business, charity, and necessary ordinary expences of the Academy.

According to the statement of the President, Mr. West, the 500l. now voted to Government, is to be paid down directly to a Banker by the immediate sale of some part of our stock, or to be paid out of the produce of the first weeks of the next coming Exhibition ; from the perplexed fumbling manner in which this was stated, it is difficult to decypher his meaning ; but I believe we shall find that both these particulars, the sale of some part of the stock, and the produce of the coming exhibition, were conjointly implied in it. It is to be hoped that these first weeks of the coming exhibition will be very productive, and that the Academy may incur no risk from its recent initiation in the political trade of mortgaging its income to make splendid donations, or to what is even worse, in confining the application of this income, in the present and all the future stages of its growth and increase, to this mere pension business, which is so much in the disposal of the Council, or rather, of any influence or cabal which possibly might hereafter govern in the Council. So much for political intriguing, combination, and cabal, mixed with the academical and interesting concerns of the *Belle Arti*. I hope there will never more be any occasion for my meddling in so hateful a matter,

as there neither is, nor can be any other new property to tempt to any further enterprizes of mischievous application.

You will, I hope, carry in your recollection, that the Council of the Academy is not (as many mistakenly have supposed) a permanent body of eight Artists, selected for their peculiar wisdom and skill, from the forty Academicians, the better to assist in regulating and governing the Academy, like the Privy Counsellors in the executive governments of great Princes; quite the contrary, our Council of the Academy is biennially changed, until all the Academicians have served in rotation, and according to the laws of the Royal Academy, and its uniform unremitting usage, ever since its institution, for twenty-eight years, to the 7th of November, 1796. The authority of the Council appears to have been delegated from the general body of the forty Academicians, merely to compass two serviceable, desirable ends; first, to obtain an executive instrument of authority, manageable and convenient, in order to superintend the due execution of the laws of the Academy already established; and, secondly, for the convenient and more manageable instrumentality of framing all new laws and regulations which might be thought necessary to add to the old laws, and which thus prepared and proposed by the Council, at the
general

general assembly of the Academicians, were adopted or rejected according to the majority of the votes in that general assembly of the Academicians, and, if adopted, confirmed at the next meeting of the said general assembly: and still further, the one hundred pounds charity annually given away by the Academy, through the hands of its executive serviceable instrument the President and Council, the said executive instrument was directed and governed in the distribution of that charity by the discretionary consideration of the majority of the recommendatory letters of the several Academicians, or the pressing necessities of the poor claimants stated in those letters. And for all this service and trouble taken by the Council, two pounds five shillings was to be divided amongst the attending members at each meeting of the Council, four of which Council, with the President or his Deputy, being sufficient to make a Quorum, and the Secretary, who had a regular annual salary, not being included in the division of this money.

Since November 7, 1796, by the law passed on that night, if it can be considered as being regularly passed according to usage (see pages 12, 13, 14, and 15, of my letter to the Dilletanti Society, quarto edition); but by that law, the Council thinks itself now completely empowered to dispose of the present and future income of
the

the Academy in annual pensions of from fifty to seventy pounds each, &c. without any notice, communication, interference, or concurrence of the general assembly of the Academicians, who are thus henceforward superseded, and reduced to the condition of mere idle lookers-on. The Council has lately been applied to by certain members of the Academy for pecuniary assistance amounting to some hundred pounds; their determination on these applications they have never deigned to lay before the general meeting of the Academy, where the very interesting business of acquiescence or refusal would be attended with so much the more credit, or the less chagrin. Surely, if a power of such magnitude is suffered to operate on the property and feelings of the Academy, it would be much safer lodged with the Academy in its general meeting, than in the hands of a Council, which might be so much more easily influenced as well as appointed by a cabal.

Alas ! poor Sir Joshua ! how many melancholy consequences have taken place since your removal ; what an error, and evil, to suppress or withhold any notes you might have left of the vexatious conflicts you had with this cabal. The publication of such matters would be attended with utility to those who come after great men, and who may and ought to derive at least this advantage of a luminous detection and discovery of those evils by which,

which, perhaps for this very end, Providence permitted them to be so traversed and afflicted.

But as you may be desirous of knowing something more particularly of the nature of this pension business so often mentioned, however ardently I wish to have finally and for ever done with it, I will notwithstanding gratify you, by transcribing a few passages from our Abstract of the Instrument of Institution and Laws of the Royal Academy, which have been lately reprinted, and which I received from our Secretary on Monday the 5th of February, 1798, (on the night of my Lecture on *Chiaro Scuro*). I ought first to state, that by the Treasurer's report of the 31st of December, 1797, the solid funds of the Academy were 10,000*l.* and the charity fund 7500*l.* What I shall set down here from our before-mentioned Abstract of the Laws, &c. begins at page 27.

“ The money received at the Exhibition, after
 “ payment of the annual or contingent expences,
 “ and the usual charitable donations, shall be
 “ hereafter applied towards the increase of the
 “ Stock in the Three per Cents. Consolidated
 “ Annuities, which shall be called the *Pension*
 “ *Fund*: And when the said stock shall amount
 “ to ten thousand pounds, the Council shall have
 “ power to give the following pensions, viz.
 “ To an Academician, a pension not exceeding
 “ fifty

“ fifty pounds per annum, provided the sum given
“ does not make his annual income exceed one
“ hundred pounds.

“ To an Associate a pension not exceeding
“ thirty pounds per Annum, provided the sum
“ does not make his annual income exceed eighty
“ pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Academician, a pension
“ not exceeding thirty pounds per annum, pro-
“ vided the sum given does not make her annual
“ income exceed eighty pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Associate, a pension not
“ exceeding twenty pounds per annum, provided
“ the sum given does not make her annual income
“ exceed fifty pounds.

“ When the fund shall be increased to fifteen
“ thousand pounds, the Council shall have power
“ to give the following pensions, viz.

“ To an Academician, a pension not exceeding
“ sixty pounds per annum, provided the sum given
“ does not make his annual income exceed one
“ hundred pounds.

“ To an Associate, a pension not exceeding
“ thirty-six pounds per annum, provided the sum
“ given does not make his annual income exceed
“ eighty pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Academician, a pension
“ not exceeding thirty-six pounds per annum,
“ provided

“ provided the sum given does not make her
“ annual income exceed eighty pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Associate, a pension not
“ exceeding twenty-five pounds per annum, pro-
“ vided the sum given, does not make her annual
“ income exceed fifty pounds.

“ When the fund shall be encreased to twenty
“ thousand pounds, the Council shall have power
“ to give the following pensions, viz.

“ To an Academician, a pension not exceeding
“ seventy pounds per annum, provided the sum
“ given does not make his annual income exceed
“ one hundred pounds.

“ To an Associate, a pension not exceeding fifty
“ pounds per annum, provided the sum given
“ does not make his annual income exceed eighty
“ pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Academician, a pension
“ not exceeding fifty pounds per annum, pro-
“ vided the sum given does not make her annual
“ income exceed eighty pounds.

“ To a Widow of an Associate, a pension not
“ exceeding thirty pounds per annum, provided
“ the sum given does not make her annual income
“ exceed fifty pounds.

“ Every Academician, Associate, Widow of an
“ Academician, and Widow of an Associate, who
“ is a claimant for a pension from the Royal
“ Academy, shall produce such proofs, as the

“ President

“ President and Council may require, of their
 “ situation and circumstances; and in this exami-
 “ nation the President and Council shall consider
 “ themselves as scrupulously bound to investigate
 “ each claim, and to make proper discriminations
 “ between imprudent conduct, and the unavoid-
 “ able failure of professional employment, in the
 “ Members of the Society; and also to satisfy
 “ themselves in respect to the moral conduct of
 “ their widows.

“ Any Academician or Associate who shall
 “ omit exhibiting in the Royal Academy for two
 “ successive years, shall have no claim on the
 “ pension fund, under any of the regulations
 “ above-mentioned, unless he can give satisfactory
 “ proof to the President and Council, that such
 “ omission was occasioned by illness, age, or any
 “ other cause, which they shall think a reasonable
 “ excuse. This limitation not to extend to
 “ Sculptors, who are to be allowed three years,
 “ nor to Academicians or Associates, who have
 “ attained the age of sixty.

“ These pensions shall not preclude any Acade-
 “ mician, Associate, or their Widows, in cases of
 “ particular distress, arising from young children,
 “ or other causes, from receiving such temporary
 “ relief, as may appear to the Council to be
 “ necessary or proper to be granted. But it is to
 “ be strictly understood, that this Pension Fund
 “ shall

“ shall, on no account, be considered as liable
 “ to claims to relieve such difficulties. All sums
 “ paid on account of claims of such a nature, shall
 “ be carried to the current expences of the year.

“ After the Pension Fund is made up twenty
 “ thousand pounds three per cents. all future sav-
 “ ings shall be vested in the public funds, and be
 “ applied to the general purposes of the Academy.”

A few quæries naturally occur here, viz. In any essential alterations in the places, or new acquisitions to the objects of study in the Academy, is it not still the duty of the Council previously to lay the whole matter before the General Meeting of the Academy, either to be determined by its united skill, or by any Committee it might think proper to appoint for that express purpose.

As the authority of the President and Council is a derived, subordinate authority, extending no further than to the framing and proposing new laws for the consideration of the Academy, or to the over-seeing the due execution of the laws already established, it cannot be a quære, and the President and Council (for many other and weighty reasons, besides their having no authority or commission from the Academy for it,) most assuredly ought not by any means to be permitted to treat with the Minister, with any Corporation, or any other people of importance, respecting any

matter where the honour or interests of the Academy may be concerned, without the complete and entire knowledge of the Academy, who ought to supervise all the stages of the progress of such transactions, in order that no impediment from mismanagement or other cause might disable the Academy from terminating such transaction with honour and satisfaction. The honour and interest of the Academy absolutely require this; the President and Council might be utterly inadequate in many cases that might occur, and they ought not in any case whatever be permitted to envelop any thing with mystery and concealment, nothing should ever be permitted to be smuggled, and erasure and undoing would in some cases be utterly impracticable, and in all cases must ever appear unbecoming, odious, and disgraceful to such a body as the Royal Academy of Great Britain.

The absolute necessity for this cautious prudence of the Academy must be very apparent even from what occurred at the very last meeting of the 3d of March, 1798. When the proposed business of that meeting, consisting of Mr. Wyatt's motion of 500l. aid to Government, was read to the Academy, and sure to meet its general concurrence, a Member (Mr. Farrington) got up and said, he had been privately informed that there was something else connected with that motion of Mr. Wyatt's, and that he wondered much why

why it had not been read. After some boggling and difficulties, it was at last acknowledged, that the motion was indeed ushered in by a little preamble from Mr. West, the President, the reading of which preamble was not judged necessary to the business in hand. The cry of, Read it immediately, coming from every side of the table, the Secretary complied; and the Academy, on hearing it, rose up with indignation, and ordered that the two leaves which contained this preface or preamble should be immediately erased—torn from the book. It was then observed, that as this was the book of the minutes of the Council, the erasure could not be properly made but by the Council themselves. The Academy immediately appointed a Committee to retire into the next room, in order to draw up another preface, which they could admit without shame or loss of dignity: and when they returned with it, the Academy retired to another part of the room in which they held their sessions, and left the table to the Council to make the necessary erasure, and the insertion of the alteration, which they did accordingly. On enquiry since, I find the two leaves have actually been torn from the books of the Council. I am persuaded, however, that this erasure was a rash, ill-judged measure, and that it would have been much better to have left the whole matter standing faithfully in our books, and to have inserted the

alterations as minutes of the next meeting; and this would certainly have been done, had the Academy the advantage of that recollection which a second meeting would have afforded; as such a memento would stand usefully, exemplarily, on their books. It would be a good illustration of the perilous nature of all sinister transactions, the success of which depend either on previous concealment, or subsequent effrontery, or both; for if this matter had not been fortunately brought to light at the general meeting, it must however at some time or other have been generally known, that the next morning after that meeting a transaction was laid before his Majesty, as coming from the Royal Academy, of which that Academy had no knowledge whatever, and which never could be known to it without exciting its disgust and reprobation. After all, perhaps there is little to value in the most refined Machiavilian politics; it might have pushed this instance of mere illiterate mother cunning one or two removes further; but they must both eventually be found to terminate in the same disgrace. Surely, if the most unreserved and generous openness and publicity is peculiar, and to be expected in any matters, it ought to be in those of the most liberal of Arts, and of a Royal Academy where the King himself deigns to be its Chief and Patron. However, fortunately, this unbecoming transaction was only
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between the Council and the Academy, where the opportunity was still in reserve of saving our credit, by availing ourselves of the very cultivated understanding and information of several valuable members of our body. But in lieu of the Academy, had this been a transaction of the mere President and Council (unaided by the Academy) with his Majesty's Ministers, or with any other society, or people of importance, it must chill with horror to think of the consequences. Revoking, alteration, erasure, would be then impossible, and the Royal Academy, however innocent, must inevitably be committed without remedy.

It may be proper also to mention another particular of some importance, as well from its immediate effects, as from the possibility and probability of its being hereafter converted into a precedent. I am informed that the President and Council have notified by public advertisement, that the admittance to the Exhibition, including the catalogue, is raised to one shilling and sixpence. Quære, is not this a matter of such magnitude as ought not to be presumed upon without the knowledge, authority, and confirmation of the general assembly of the Academicians? If such a licence is permitted, it may be extended or contracted to—but it is no less vexatious than disgraceful to dwell longer on a subject of such humiliation to the im-

portance and authority of the Royal Academy; and therefore to finish, and come to our immediate point, you may now see clearly that the funds of the Academy are already so disposed of, that there remains no further expectation from that quarter for the Collection of the Materials for the Study of our young Painters, so often mentioned. Our only hopes now remaining must be from his Majesty and the Public: if something be not done by them in this way, the Academy, the Pupils, and the Lovers of Art, must go without, and steer their course as well as they can amidst the perils and difficulties of fraud, folly, and ignorance, to which they are so peculiarly exposed in this country.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES BARRY.

Castle-Street, March 17, 1798.

Not long after writing the above Letter, an occasion offered for another Letter on Academical and very National Concerns, which I addressed to the Committee of the Lords of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, respecting the Coinage, of which the following is a copy :

MY LORDS,

Your Lordships having lately, and very much to your honour, confided the Public Trust respect-
ing

ing the Taste of the Coinage to the Royal Academy, Mr. Barry, Professor of Painting to that Academy, thinks it his duty to communicate the inclosed information to your Lordships, requesting you will be so good as to excuse the hurry with which it is drawn up, as Mr. Barry is working at the Adelphi against time, during the recess of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts; has consequently but very little leisure, and could not at present be induced to meddle with any other business, but from a sense of the duty he owes to the Public Service, on this very interesting occasion of a Reformation of the Coinage, to which he in common with the other Academicians has been called by your Lordships graceful and very exemplary invitation.

The information offered to your Lordships attention is what follows :

“ On the meeting of the Academy, July 17, a Letter was read from the Lords of the Committee of the Council, requiring the Academy to select such a Committee of a few of its members as might be best furnished with that peculiar information which would best enable their Lordships to improve and perfect the Coinage of the Country, as a becoming work of Taste and Art. The reading of this Letter was prefaced and followed by some observations of the President, still further elucidating the views of their Lordships. Mr. Barry then

got

got up, and proposed, as the best method of getting all desirable necessary information on this head, that, previous to appointing a Committee, all such Academicians as chose to suggest any advice on this matter might be permitted to offer it, either *viva voce*, or by a written motion, at that or at the next meeting, which, as expedition was required, might be convened for the purpose next day, or the day after; and that the Committee which we might then appoint, would as well as their Lordships, be in full possession of useful information, which might otherways never reach them. This would not comport with the views of the majority, and accordingly Mr. Tyler moved, That a Committee of four, with the President, be immediately appointed to confer with their Lordships on this business. Mr. Barry objected to this, urging, That, as this Committee might be appointed by a cabal, whose views were very different from what the subject and their Lordships required, the very people who ought to be consulted, and whom their Lordships would wish to consult, would by this means be kept out of view, and their opinions concealed with them. Mr. Tyler observed, That any thing they had to suggest might be communicated to the Committee, who would be very thankful for it; and without further ceremony made his motion for the appointment of the Committee, which was seconded by

by Mr. Catten, and carried immediately. It may not be improper to remark, that Mr. Catten is a Coach Painter, and Mr. Tyler Bricklayer to the Board of Ordnance. Here, my Lords, you may behold some small part of these combined evils which sooner or later, according to the ethics of the time, to effrontery and political cunning, operate with such fatal success upon all public institutions ; at least, they have so operated upon all public Academies, as not only to prevent great and effectual exertions and advancement, but to introduce, foster, and give currency to imbecility and wretchedness. This has been long a paradox which has puzzled Europe : Public Academies originally receive reputation and eclat from the few great men who unfortunately contributed to form and occasion their being instituted. But in a Society of forty Academicians, where the majority must be very different, and where, notwithstanding every thing goes by vote, so many opportunities and temptations offer for successful combination and cabal, as will completely level all characters ; nay, much worse, it will be soon found that low Artists will sway and govern in an Academy, who could never have been known to the Public, if that Academy was not in existence. Shortly after the appointment of this Committee, the cabal, as if afraid or ashamed of what they had done, consented that this Committee should be

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empowered no further than to receive their Lordships ideas, and report them to the Academy. At the next meeting (last Friday) the President, after reporting the conference with their Lordships, observed, that the Committee being now dissolved, the Academy might proceed to appoint another, or reappoint the same Committee, or increase their number. As this passed without any observation, and a pause ensuing, Mr. Barry then got up and observed, That as the Academy was now in complete possession of their Lordships public-spirited, truly noble ideas, our respect for them would be best shewn, by such Academicians as chose immediately offering their best advice on this head; and that, to this end, he had in his pocket a motion, which he intended reading at the last meeting, if opportunity had been permitted, which he would now, and accordingly did read to them. Here it follows:

“ As the most secure mode of providing against the injuries resulting from the usage, and consequently the most susceptible of admitting and indulging all the desiderata respecting the perfection and most Artist-like execution of Gold and Silver Coins, I move ‘ That the Academy recommend to the Lords of the Committee, that the valuable part of the workmanship of the Coin be sunk beneath the surface, as it were in a coffer, like the roses in the Architectonic Soffitas, and like the ob-
jects

jects in bas-relief on the Egyptian obelisks, as well as those bas-reliefs of the ancient Hindoos, which are all defended in the same wise exemplary manner. The reasons for treating Coin the same way are not only exactly similar, but infinitely stronger, and must be too obvious to need my repeating them. There are even some of the ancient Greek Coins treated in the same way, though partially and but imperfectly, although at present it does not occur to my recollection which of them. All this might comport very well with milling the edges, and raising the letters on the surface, (if that worse than useless custom is still adhered to), and they may pass by weight as the Coin does at present.

N. B. ' Such workmanship as Simon's Head of Charles the Second, Cromwell, the Strozzi, Medusa, or as may be found on many of the Papal and other Coins, thus securely bedded in coffers, is all that can be desired on this head, for setting the most becoming, most glorious, national example that occurs in the history of Coinage; an honour most justly merited by the modesty, public spirit, and true patriotism with which their Lordships the Committee of the Council have referred this matter to the Academy.

(Signed) ' JAMES BARRY.'

July 17, 1798.

P. S.

P. S. ‘ Once more, I cannot help saying that this idea, properly executed, would not only be original and unique in the story of Coinage, would be the least exposed to injury from friction, would require no ingrailling, indented, or engraved lines or pitts, which might furnish occasion for fraudulently charging the Coin with any base metal; would allow of every Artist-like perfection with respect to the designing part, whether any new device be adopted, or whether, which is rather to be hoped, we adhere to the old ones, venerable through long usage; and in either case, I would pledge my life or reputation with their Lordships for the certainty, ease, and simplicity of its execution. The sulphur impressions of very many of the Greek Intaglios may afford some idea of what might be done on modern Coins.’

It may be as well now, my Lords, to continue writing in my own person, and proceed to say, that as I well foresaw would happen, a great deal of unpleasant altercation followed the reading of my motion, and it was then thought proper to insist that the Committee was not dissolved, but was still existing; and this, as every thing else moved by the cabal, was immediately confirmed by putting it to the vote, notwithstanding my appealing to the books, and even to the speech of the President at the beginning of the meeting; although
after

after some further altercation, and Mr. Coply's observing, that they ought at least to have appointed such a Committee as would be most likely to be best acquainted with these particular matters, and in no need of consulting any other Academicians, and some other remarks to the same effect, made such an impression, that it was at last agreed, that the Committee should be only a Committee of communication between their Lordships and the Academy, and this was set down accordingly in our books. Thus the matter is, according to my apprehension, in a state of some little confusion and unfortunately liable to much misunderstanding on the part of their Lordships. What they wisely required of the Academy was a Committee of *Periti*, and what we have given them is only a mere vehicle, a Committee of communication between their Lordships and the Academy, where the *Periti* still remain.

Your Lordships seem to have been well aware that the particular assistance you required of the Academy could lie in the way of but a very few Artists, and that men may be very excellent painters in many departments of the Art, who never could have had any occasion to furnish themselves with information respecting the taste of Coins, and other matters of antiquity, which many of them, ridiculously following the foolish part of the example of a great man (Rembrandt),
despise

despise and reprobate, as contemptible niceties, below the notice of the imitators of nature, which they would exclusively and short-sightedly arrogate to vulgarity and a mean choice. However, occasions sometimes occur, where the little politics and arts of life might make it necessary for them not to appear to want this knowledge, and perhaps oblige them to play the part of the dog in the manger, in withholding or marring the enjoyment of that particular credit they cannot obtain for themselves; and it might be possibly this motive that induced our cabal to adopt such a mode of meeting your Lordships wishes, as would best keep out of view those who, they thought, having already too much credit, it would be good policy to obscure. However, although I had resolved never to have any further contest with this cabal after my Letter to the Dilettanti Society should be published, where the conduct of the Academy, and its situation respecting those public trusts, was fully discussed and brought into public view, yet I could not withhold myself from once more embarking in these unfortunately boisterous contests, as the occasion would not admit of delay, and was so exceedingly interesting to the Public. And although I then told them with some indignation, that I would give myself and them no more trouble in this business, and that I am still resolved never to give another vote in the Academy, until
the

the Academicians shall be bound by oath to lay aside all cabal, and to have nothing in view but the Public service; yet I will very cheerfully devote my attendance to your Lordships, and will meet whomsoever you chuse to appoint, either at Mr. Wedgwood's, at the British Museum, or Mr. Tassie's, or at any other place, where we might run over some Coins, Medals, and Intaglios, or rather the casts from them, and where I will undertake, without any other reward than the gratification of contributing importantly to the Public service, to demonstrate the practicability of an improvement in the Taste of the Coinage, and in the provision against its consumption by the wearing, which though fully warranted in some particulars by them all has notwithstanding never yet been unitedly effected, by Greeks, Romans, Italians, or any other.

I have the honour to be, with every recognition of respect for your Lordships exalted situation, and with the sincerest admiration of your exemplary, unprecedented conduct in it,

My LORDS,

Your most devoted humble servant,

JAMES BARRY.

P. S. As the Public Trusts respecting matters of Taste which are referred to the Royal Academy,
are

are gradually becoming more important, and as I have, in my Letter to the Dilettanti Society, entered very fully into what is likely to produce satisfaction or annoyance in that business, I shall pray your Lordships to accept a copy of it. You will find, from page 13 to page 22, some facts regarding these Public Trusts brought forward, which, as they are truly stated, and cannot be contradicted, ought most certainly to be remedied, and speedily : had they been false, I must acknowledge myself to merit every reprobation.

The above article, respecting our conduct in the matter referred to us by your Lordships, will, perhaps, make another part, which will unite very well with the rest in a Second Edition of that Letter.

Great Room of the Society of Arts, John-Street,

Adelphi, Tuesday, July 31, 1798.

To this Letter their Lordships did me the honour of sending the following Answer.

Council-Office, Whitehall, August 6, 1798.

SIR,

I am directed by the Lords of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council to acquaint you, that the Earl of Liverpool laid before their Lordships your Letter of the 31st ult. and I am to
return

return you their Lordships thanks for the observations and information contained therein.

I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

STEPH. COTTRELL.

James Barry, Esq.

Much about this time, or a little after, a considerable part of the public attention and conversation was occupied about the Italian part of the Orleans Collection of Pictures, about what had been done by the Dilettanti Society, and the conference of some of its members with the Minister respecting the purchase of the whole or part of this Orleans Collection, and the subsequent happy interference of three patriotic noblemen to prevent this Collection being carried out of the country; and the time of reading my Lectures occurring a few days after these pictures were exhibited to the public view, I thought it right eagerly to embrace the favourable opportunity which now offered, and to introduce into those Lectures some remarks, and in such a manner (respecting the present momentous crisis and occasion, for happily employing the funds of the Academy in the purchase of some part of this Collection),

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lection), as could not be overlooked, and must now inevitably bring my opponents to a public issue with me on this hitherto so long procrastinated business. And notwithstanding those passages had naturally more pertinence and force, supported as they originally were by the other parts of the Lecture with which they were interwoven: yet, though divested of this, I shall not hesitate to introduce them here for the satisfaction of the reader, as they have so happily contributed with the other stimuli to effect the purpose for which they were intended.

As to the new matter introduced this year into my first Lecture, respecting my remarks on and refutation of some passages in the Notes of the venerable and so justly celebrated Dr. Lowth on *Isaiah*, concerning a particular in the *Chaldaic Antiquities*, of very great importance in the *History of Ancient Arts and Knowledge*, and my additional observations respecting such matters of *Hebrew Antiquity*, as afford a clear and certain elucidation of the *Second Commandment*, and the error of our vulgar translation in that particular. Although I think these remarks and investigations of considerable importance to the *Art and its History*, yet as the cabal of the *Academy* can be but little concerned in them, I shall insert only the conclusion, where perhaps in some measure they may feel its application.

“ It was my wish to have carried to a much
 “ greater extent these interesting remarks and
 “ pursuit of facts respecting the state of the Arts in
 “ those early periods ; but the contracted, beggarly
 “ state of our Academical Library, is a real, a
 “ most extensive grievance, and to me more espe-
 “ cially, has been vexatious, and injurious in a
 “ very great degree. From my eager wishes and
 “ ambition of giving such a useful, improving,
 “ and enlarged tendency to what I have to offer
 “ from this Chair, as might best comport with
 “ the views of Art, as exercised by a Great
 “ People, now just on the eve of the nineteenth
 “ century, I am obliged to be frequently in the
 “ habit of losing much time, and undergoing
 “ much disappointment, in the endeavour of
 “ borrowing such books as may best enable me to
 “ collect such scattered observations and facts as
 “ ought to be united, and (what I was ill able to
 “ spare) it cost me near ten pounds not long since
 “ in the purchase of a few books, which were
 “ necessarily to be examined, for the settling a
 “ certain fact, which I had last year the satisfaction
 “ of offering to your attention. This, young
 “ Gentlemen, however it might coincide with my
 “ ambition of being useful to you, yet it comports
 “ ill, very ill, with the professorial salary of
 “ thirty pounds a year. At least, now, after more
 “ than five and twenty years establishment of our

“ Institution, one might have expected that our
 “ Library would have been filled with whatever
 “ could be useful, and that the Professor might in
 “ his night-gown and slippers have an opportunity
 “ of examining them conveniently, either by hav-
 “ ing a place of residence on the spot, or the per-
 “ mission of having them occasionally brought to
 “ his own habitation. However, let us go on
 “ with patience, and make the most we can of
 “ our wretched situation : there is some merit and
 “ virtue even in that. I was speaking of the
 “ ancient nations, &c. &c.”

Little new occurring in the second Lecture, I
 shall proceed to the third, where observing upon
 the different styles of design, of drawing, and the
 several degrees of merit of the great leaders of the
 different Schools of Art, the following new ob-
 servation was introduced :

“ The Academicians and Associates having
 “ been lately indulged with the opportunity of
 “ of inspecting the Italian part of the Orleans Col-
 “ lection, I had no small satisfaction on this inter-
 “ view with my old acquaintance and benefactors,
 “ in indulging the hope that what had been so
 “ long the object of my ardent wishes, would now
 “ probably be soon obtained ; nay, would cer-
 “ tainly, if rightly managed, with a becoming
 “ skill

“ skill and dignity on the part of the Academy ;
 “ who can question it, that has a proper concep-
 “ tion of the high, generously cultivated spirit of
 “ those out of the Academy, who might co-
 “ operate in a transaction so essentially necessary
 “ for the advancement of the Arts, for their de-
 “ pendant Manufactures, for the public enter-
 “ tainment, improvement, and glory, and for
 “ the fair dealing, and the justice that is due to
 “ you, young Gentlemen, who receive your Edu-
 “ cation in this Institution of a Royal Academy.
 “ Although many, and some of the best of these
 “ pictures are already disposed of by private con-
 “ tract, yet I should not despair, if this matter
 “ be properly managed. Oh ! how necessary and
 “ salutary is true greatness of mind, in all leading
 “ departments, and how universally will every thing
 “ wither and decay without it ; nothing, no artifi-
 “ cial dexterity or management can supply its place.
 “ Poor Sir Joshua Reynolds, God be with him ;
 “ were he living, he could still find a remedy ; and
 “ I must and will say, that the occasion ought
 “ not to be lost, and surely will not, cannot ; and
 “ therefore, I think I may indulge myself in the
 “ satisfaction of reflecting that you, young Gen-
 “ tlemen, will receive substantial and extensive
 “ benefit from an attentive consideration of many
 “ of the masterly, truly noble performances in
 “ this Collection. In the very article on which I

“ had been speaking, the castigated, admirable
 “ style of design of Lodovico Carrache, there is
 “ in the dead figure of the Christ, No. 53, a spe-
 “ cimen in that way the most correct, happiest,
 “ most exquisite that can be imagined, and most
 “ assuredly equal to any thing of his at Bologna.
 “ I hope some time hence to have a little leisure
 “ for some general remarks on a few of those spe-
 “ cimens of the old masters which enrich this
 “ collection ; and in the mean time I shall proceed
 “ to observe, that these important principles of
 “ Design or Drawing, which either separately or
 “ more united, &c.”

No matter relating to our present purpose oc-
 curring in [the fourth Lecture, I shall proceed to
 the fifth, where certain matters were introduced,
 which I knew would kindle some of the motley
 members of the cabal into a flame, that would
 soon be visible ; and as they laid great stress in the
 charges against the Professor, upon what came for-
 ward in this Lecture respecting a deceased Aca-
 demician, whom I had contrasted with another
 deceased Academician, the reader will excuse the
 length of my citation from that Lecture, as it is my
 wish to leave nothing undone that may be in the
 least necessary towards an honourable, full, and
 compleat exposition of every thing that depends
 upon me. By the bye, this fifth Lecture on
 the

the subject of Chiaro Scuro was first read in the Academy on Feb. 5, 1787, and I have been informed that some of the applications of those principles to the works of architecture have been made use of by Sir William Chambers in the second edition of his work on Civil Architecture, and which he had not thought of, or perhaps known, when he published the first edition of that work. However, of that matter the reader will judge apart, or at another time, as it has no relation to the present subject of my difference with the cabal.

After a great deal of previous investigation and developement in that Lecture, the following passages occur :

“ I have in a former discourse had occasion to take
 “ notice that Architecture (where it was not a mechanical art, dependant on mere convenience, and
 “ upon the rule and plummet,) was an emanation
 “ of the Arts of Design, and consequently, in every
 “ thing that regarded its more liberal concerns, its
 “ beautiful or majestic effects, as a whole and parts,
 “ it was the pure offspring of Drawing or Modeling, and absolutely and solely depended upon the
 “ the composition of forms, and the composition
 “ of Chiaro Scuro and Relievo, which those forms
 “ produced. The same principles of uniformity
 “ and variety, or of variegated unity, which must

“ be previously pursued, in so arranging and con-
 “ structing the figures and general forms of a
 “ picture, that they may serve as a proper sub-
 “ stratum for that Chiaro Scuro, which brings
 “ them to the sight as a harmonious totality.
 “ These same principles, and these only, are the
 “ constituents of all similar agreeable effects in
 “ Architecture : since the Architect must have
 “ these effects present to his mind, that they may
 “ follow as consequences from the arrangement of
 “ forms which enter into the composition of his
 “ building. These laws of variegated unity being
 “ grounded upon the just consideration of the hu-
 “ man faculties, and accommodated (as was before
 “ observed) to our abilities and inabilities of per-
 “ ception, they are therefore equally applicable to
 “ every whole and its parts, and are great agents
 “ of satisfaction in other Arts, as well as in those
 “ which depend upon vision ; nay, they are appli-
 “ cable to Nature herself, which may be made
 “ a great work of Art, with no small accumula-
 “ tion of advantage, as is evident in gardening,
 “ the laying out of grounds, &c. &c. When the
 “ examples of beautiful and majestic arrange-
 “ ments of relative magnitudes and forms in
 “ Architecture were once executed, they might
 “ be easily copied and multiplied, by the rule and
 “ compass of mere mechanics. But the History
 “ of Architecture and Architects, both in Greece
 “ and

“ and Italy, affords one continued chain of proof,
 “ that all the great inventors, restorers, and im-
 “ provers of Architecture, were (as might natu-
 “ rally have been expected) Painters or Sculptors.
 “ This by the bye, as it neither suits our time, nor
 “ the occasion, to go into any historical details.
 “ But what is immediately for our purpose, and
 “ was indeed my inducement for mentioning
 “ Architecture in this place, is the occasion it
 “ affords for the further illustration of the utility
 “ and importance of Chiaro Scuro, and the abso-
 “ lute necessity of its being a leading consideration
 “ in the fabrication of all objects presented to the
 “ sight.

“ Thus it is apparent that variegated unity
 “ and its consequent relievo of a proportionate
 “ light and shade, is the operating cause of the
 “ beautiful arrangements in Architecture, as well
 “ as in Painting and Sculpture. There is how-
 “ ever this remarkable difference in those Arts.
 “ In Architecture, the proportionate arrangement,
 “ and its relievo of light and shade is, I had almost
 “ said, the whole of the Art ; but at least, it is
 “ of much more essential consequence to that Art
 “ than it is even to Painting and Sculpture ; and
 “ for this plain reason, that the particular inani-
 “ mate, square or curve ingredients of the archi-
 “ tectonic composition, have but little value or
 “ interest in themselves, when compared with the
 “ various

“ various intrinsic beauties of animal and vegeta-
 “ ble life, which enter into the compositions of the
 “ Painter and Sculptor. The successful manage-
 “ ment of this variegated unity and its relieve of
 “ light and shade, can only be expected from the
 “ skilful Designer; it is he alone, who from the sure
 “ and expansive principles of composition and
 “ chiaro-scuro, can pursue beauty and sublimity in
 “ a thousand different ways, whilst without these
 “ essential requisites of Design, men are but mere
 “ builders, and must unavoidably copy, or plun-
 “ der from the works of those who have gone
 “ before them; and in either case, the absurdities
 “ that may result from the difference of climate,
 “ local situation, and ill-according particulars,
 “ however beautiful in their own original, proper
 “ arrangement, &c. &c.

“ In pursuing this important part of the distri-
 “ bution and effects of light and shade, it gives me
 “ no small pleasure to find that I have been led to
 “ take notice of a particular which reflects great
 “ honour upon our own age, as compared with
 “ with the last. Some of the most distinguished
 “ Architects, both here and on the continent, are
 “ in the number of our ablest Designers : of this
 “ truth, your own recollection will furnish such
 “ an instance, in those very admirable drawings
 “ of our worthy Professor of Architecture, which
 “ are annually exhibited round this chair, as makes
 “ it

“ makes it altogether unnecessary for me to offer
 “ further proofs of the found and enlarged prin-
 “ ciples of Design, and harmonious arrangement
 “ of effects, which have been so happily pursued
 “ by the Architects of the present century.”

So much of what was written and read since the
 year 1787, I thought it necessary to transcribe here,
 the better to usher in the new matter read this year.
 Here it follows :

“ My satisfaction in contemplating the very
 “ picturesque fine relish which characterise some of
 “ those admirable drawings of your late Professor,
 “ Mr. Sandby, was, I must confess, frequently
 “ disturbed by the vexatious recollection that they
 “ were only drawings, and that they, or some-
 “ thing similar, had not been carried into execu-
 “ tion, in lieu of the mass of buildings which sur-
 “ rounds us, and with so little taste and advantage
 “ unhappily occupies one of the finest situations
 “ perhaps in the world. The populous high road
 “ of communication between the two great cities
 “ of London and Westminster, and on the very
 “ bank of the river Thames, with the Surry hills
 “ ornamenting the opposite side. With all this, and
 “ the liberal purse of a great but a too incautious
 “ people open to him, could Sir William Cham-
 “ bers make no other use of all these advantages,
 “ than

“ than to make us regret our being unhappily
 “ deprived of them whilst his unfortunate build-
 “ ing shall remain, and God knows how long
 “ after, as the combination of all the circumstances
 “ that administer occasion for the erection of great
 “ public buildings can but rarely occur. Had
 “ the designs or models for such a building been
 “ exposed to the public inspection for any given
 “ time, some one would have suggested the hint
 “ of contriving to leave apertures of gout, where
 “ the eyes of passengers might from the Strand be
 “ occasionally fascinated by the distant prospect,
 “ which, together with the breaking open the
 “ south-east and south-west corners of that almost
 “ quadrangular well, would help to ventilate and
 “ brush away that noxious air which must other-
 “ ways hang about all confined situations. Alas !
 “ what a confederation and arrangement of pictu-
 “ resque beauties have here been lost, for want of
 “ the talents and resources of such a man as Mr.
 “ Sandby. His Painter-like relish would have
 “ given us something more of Father Thames
 “ than a black statue in the entrance to——no
 “ matter what. How melancholy to reflect on
 “ the situation in which almost always great under-
 “ takings of exertion in the Art are placed ; how
 “ inaccessible to certain characters, of that suffici-
 “ ency and integrity, who alone are calculated to
 “ render them creditable to the public reputation,
 “ and

“ and how much are those great personages to be
 “ pitied in whose disposal those undertakings are,
 “ surrounded as they have always, and will probably
 “ ever be, by the shameless, industrious political
 “ artifices, which are unhappily but too well cal-
 “ culated to substitute the lesser for the greater
 “ Artist, to furnish so many opportunities of exer-
 “ tion to Sir William Chambers, and so few to
 “ Mr. Sandby.”

This little tribute I could not withhold my feel-
 ings from offering to Art, to Truth, and to the
 respectable and amiable memory of Mr. Thomas
 Sandby, your late Professor of Architecture; and
 it must afford no small consolation to us all when
 we reflect, that his place is likely to be so ably
 supplied by the eminent character who succeeds
 him, and who is so well furnished with whatever
 can give it grace and ornament: and I expect
 from him, from his integrity, information and
 love of art in general, and exemplary renunciation,
 or rather reprobation of all those sinister, base in-
 vasions of the internal decorations of all buildings,
 as well public as private, which for a long time
 past our Architects have mischievously and impu-
 dently assumed to themselves. I hope to be spared
 the trouble of entering a formal protest in the
 name of the British School of Painting and Sculp-
 ture, against the further continuance of those sinis-
 ter proceedings, where merely from the considera-
 tion

tion of the poundage, which the Architects receive on such works, the inside of our walls, rooms, and staircases are frittered and broken by stucco ornaments of griffins, cobwebs, honey-suckles, pannells, and such like insipid, not to say disgusting trash, as misoccupy all the space around us, which ought to have been wisely and happily reserved for those highly cultivated efforts of Painting and Sculpture, so worthy the national reputation, so conducive to the cultivation of general good taste, and of those humane feelings which form the highest gratifications of social life.

These Architects, may perhaps tell us, that they sometimes employ our Painters, as well as the other Artists, in the internal decorations; but will they have the impudence to miscall the painted imitations of basso relievo, which is itself an imperfect and partial representation of those entire scenes of nature, which it ought to be the Painter's glory to rival and to outdo; will they obtrude this misuse, this maiming and emasculation of Painting, which can have nothing to recommend or rather to apologize for its introduction, but the mere consideration of its helping to fill the pockets of the Architect, and thus to bloat and swell him up into an imaginary consequence so fatal to good taste: and is it for this base instrumentality, that we are to breed up Painters in a British and Royal Academy; if so, certainly the pupils will have no
need

need of the assistance of such a collection as the Orleans Gallery, and the occasion of purchasing such matters, may be suffered to pass away without regret : Fie upon such considerations, let them be for ever reprobated, even by common and vulgar sense. If one of the three arts of Painting, Sculpture or Architecture, were to direct for the other two, no man but the most unfeeling and narrow-minded, could, for a moment, imagine it should be Architecture. Oh ! how much is for ever lost to the Public, from the want of a due consideration of this truth. How many and deeply rooted evils have operated in this Academy, and I fear will long continue to do so, from the shallow, contracted mind, and the unhappily too great authority, weight, and influence of Sir William Chambers.

The principles which must operate in the growth and expansion of Academical National Glory, are very different from those which are calculated for the low Court Intrigues, which fill the pocket, and give a short-lived momentary consequence with unreflecting people. But to come back to the disgusting trash of stucco and painted cobweb ornaments, with which those gentlemen the Architects defile the internal part of almost all our buildings, private and public, as far as their advice, weight and influence can reach : How would old honest Vitruvius complain of such a nuisance, were he now living, may be well imagined from the following

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ing passage, which I shall hear read to you, respecting an abuse something similar, which prevailed in his time.

From Newton's Translation of Vitruvius, Book vi. Chap. 5. of the manner of Painting in Edifices.

In other apartments, that is, those for spring, autumn, and summer, as also in the atrium and peristylum, the ancients have established certain methods of painting. A picture is the representation of things that are, or may be, as men, buildings, ships, and other things; of which the copy, by having the exact form and outlines of the real body, assumes the likeness. The ancients, who originally instituted this manner of decoration, at first imitated the varieties, and marks of marble incrustation, then cornices, disposing between them divers filiceous and minaceous coloured ornaments: they proceeded afterwards to represent edifices with columns and pediments projecting; but in spacious places, such as exedrae, on account of the amplitude of the walls; they represented the fronts of scenes in the tragic, comic, or satyric manner; and ambulatories, being of a great length, they ornamented with landscapes, expressing the appearances of particular places, painting harbours, promontaries, sea-coasts, rivers, fountains, canals, temples, groves, mountains, cattle, and shep-

shepherds; in some places also, large paintings of figures representing the gods, or fabulous histories, the Trojan war, or the wandering of Ulysses, and other subjects of similar kind, which are conformable to the nature of things.

But these subjects, which our forefathers copied from nature, are now, by our depraved manners, disapproved; for monsters rather than the resemblances of natural objects are painted on the stucco; reeds are substituted for columns, and for the pediments, fluted harpaginetuli, with curling foliage and volutes; also candelabra supporting the forms of little buildings, their pediments rising out of roots, with numerous volutes, and tender stalks, having, contrary to reason, images sitting on them: so also the flowers from stalks have half figures springing with heads, some like those of men, some like those of beasts; which things neither are, nor can be, nor ever were: and this new mode so prevails, that those who are not judges, disregard the arts; for how is it possible for reeds to support a log, or candelabra buildings, and the ornaments of pediments; or stalks, which are so slender and soft, sitting figures; or the flowers of stalks produce half images; yet men being accustomed to the sight of these absurdities, do not censure, but are pleased with them, without considering whether they be proper or not; the judgment, depraved by habit, examines not whether they be

according to propriety or the rules of decor; for pictures should not be approved, unless they be conformable to truth, even although they be well executed; they ought therefore to be immediately condemned, unless they can bear the trial of rational examination, without being disapproved.

Thus at Thralles, when Apatureus of Alabanda had excellently well painted a scene in the little theatre, which with them is called Ecclesiasterion, and instead of columns had placed statues and centaurs, supporting the epistylum, the circular roof of the dome, and projecting corners of the pediments, and ornamented the cornice with lion's heads, all which have reference to the roofing and caves of edifices; above these, nevertheless, in the epicent, domes, porticos, semipediments, and all the various parts of buildings were again painted: wherefore upon the appearance of this scene, when by reason of its enrichment, it was found pleasing to all, and they were ready to applaud the work, Licinius the Mathematician, then advanced, and said, "the Alabandines are sufficiently intelligent in all civil affairs, but for a trifling impropriety are deemed injudicious; for the statues in their gymnasium are all in the attitude of pleading causes, while those in the forum are holding the discus, or in the attitude of running or playing with balls; so that the unsuitableness of the attitudes of the figures, to the purposes of the places, throws a public disgrace upon the city. Let us take care that
by

by the scene of Apaturius, we are not deemed Alabandines, or even Aldarites; for who among you places upon the tiles of the roofs of your houses columns or pediments? these things are placed upon the floors, not upon the tiles. If then we approve in painting what cannot be in fact, we of this city shall be like those, who, on account of the same error, are deemed illiterate." Apaturius dared not to reply, but took down the scene and altered it, so as to be consistent to truth; after which it was approved. I wish the immortal gods would restore Licinius to life, that he might correct this folly, and fashionable disfigurement of our stucco work; but why a false overcomes a just mode, it will not be foreign to the purpose to explain.

The ancients, with labour and application, endeavoured to make their works be approved by the excellencies of Art; this is now supplied by the beauty of colours, and the use of those of the most costly kind; and that value which was formerly given to works by the skill of the Artists, is not desired, since the expence of the proprietor supplies its place. Who among the ancients is known to have used minium, otherwise than sparingly, and as a medicine? but now it is every where laid over the whole wall; it is the same with chrysocollo, ostrum and armenium, which when laid, although without any art, appear very brilliant to the sight, and they are so costly, that it is

usually specified in the articles of agreement that they shall be purchased by the proprietor, and not by the contractor, &c. &c.

My sixth Lecture, that on Colouring, was read in the Academy the Monday after ; and the new matter introduced into that Lecture was as follows, (speaking of the necessity of ancient Examples of sound Art for the Colouring and Mechanical Conduct) :

“ But alas ! we have not yet been able to obtain
 “ this blessing in the many years we have prayed and
 “ hoped for it. This long-continued insensibility,
 “ torpor ; or what shall I call this inattention to the
 “ wants of the Academy, respecting these so very
 “ essential materials of study, is really astonishing ;
 “ more especially after the shameful, disgraceful
 “ quackery with which so many people had been
 “ duped in the recent pretended secret of the old
 “ Venetian Colouring. Our Pupils, many of our
 “ Artists, and a great part of the Public, will be
 “ continually exposed to these disgraceful decep-
 “ tions, in one shape or other, without some legi-
 “ timate Exemplars of Ancient Art to refer to.
 “ Nothing short of this can adequately answer our
 “ purpose, either with the Pupils or the Public.
 “ And is this British Royal Academy never to be
 “ in reality what it has so long pretended to be, a
 “ School

“ School for the Education of Painters of an
 “ enlarged, sublime character, comprehending
 “ all the great requisites of Art. Where is the
 “ generous patriotism that has atchieved so much
 “ for the health, convenience, and information of
 “ our Public, by the hospitals, repositories, and
 “ other noble institutions, which grace this me-
 “ tropolis of the British Empire? When will this
 “ patriotism be called out, and stimulated to do
 “ something towards compleating those views of
 “ this School for the Arts, from which the nation
 “ might and would derive so much additional
 “ glory, entertainment, and advantage? Alas!
 “ surely his Majesty, our most gracious Patron,
 “ does not know it: I shall take it for granted,
 “ that it has never been properly and sufficiently
 “ represented to him. His Majesty can have no
 “ interest but his glory, and the glory of his people,
 “ and he would never suffer these to be tarnished
 “ for the want of a small effort: his most gracious
 “ example, a few of those pictures which might be
 “ found in the royal palaces (where they are com-
 “ paratively but of little use) would be sufficient
 “ to begin with. This is so immediately practica-
 “ ble, and attended with so little expence, that
 “ it must be difficult to account for its not being
 “ adopted; more especially, as there is ground
 “ adjoining, which more than a year since was,
 “ with the usual mystery which has enveloped all

“ our concerns since the death of poor Sir
 “ Joshua ; mystery not arising from the sublimity,
 “ but, perhaps, from the meanness of the mea-
 “ sure ; but, however it be, it was and is still,
 “ unacademically whispered, that this adjoin-
 “ ing ground was to have been given to the
 “ Academy, where a gallery might be built, for
 “ the reception of these, and any other pictures we
 “ might hereafter receive, as donations or other-
 “ ways, or which might be purchased with the
 “ funds of the Academy. What a happy oppor-
 “ tunity is now offered for assisting, compleating
 “ your studies, by a few pictures from the Orleans
 “ Collection, which is now on sale. The little
 “ Giorgione hanging on the chimney-piece in
 “ Pall-Mall, the Carrache of our Saviour at the
 “ Well, the Titian on the right side of Sebastian
 “ del Piombo’s Resurrection of Lazarus, Titian’s
 “ Resurrection of our Saviour, and a few others,
 “ the Academy might now easily purchase. My
 “ Lord Carlisle, and the other noble person-
 “ ages who bought them, have too much magna-
 “ nimity not to forego their claims, and rejoice
 “ that the Academy, interfering for the nation,
 “ should become the purchaser. The Academy
 “ has sixteen thousand pounds, which it might lay
 “ out in this way, without any fears of acting
 “ erroneously ; for, from the reasons which have
 “ been adduced in the 12th and 13th pages of my
 “ Letter

“ Letter to the Dilettanti Society, quarto edition,
 “ I can never consider the act of our voting away
 “ the income of this money in pensions to our-
 “ selves as a regular act of the Academy, but
 “ quite the contrary, as irregular, incomplete,
 “ smuggled, and consequently liable to seizure.
 “ How gracefully and becoming the former repu-
 “ tation of this Academy, would such an exem-
 “ plary application of our funds to this generous,
 “ national, and academical purpose, meet the
 “ patriotic conduct of his Grace the Duke of
 “ Bridgewater, and the Earls of Carlisle and
 “ Gower, whose never to be forgotten magnani-
 “ mity came forward in the purchase of the whole
 “ Orleans Collection, in order to prevent it being
 “ carried out of the country, and thereby to furnish
 “ the Academy with the opportunity of obtaining
 “ what it wanted for the completion of its own and
 “ the public views. All this is not only still
 “ practicable, but of the utmost ease and facility ;
 “ and it is for ever to be regretted, if other my-
 “ sterious whispered schemes be recurred to, under
 “ the pretext of more dignity and expansion, and
 “ which perhaps can have no other object but to
 “ procrastinate, to let the occasion slip, and thus
 “ ultimately render the undertaking abortive. I
 “ can never forget what happened a few months
 “ since, when, speaking with a person who was
 “ likely to know of whatever should be done in

“ business, and who (from my fears for the suc-
 “ cess of the measure) I was sorry to see, meant
 “ to have no advisers, coadjutors, or even
 “ lookers-on; and was throwing such a mystery
 “ and concealment about the proceedings in this
 “ very interesting affair, as would prevent any
 “ communication with me, who had some little
 “ claims of right to know what was doing, and
 “ how. On my lamenting, and complaining to
 “ him that nothing appeared to be done or doing,
 “ with respect to the Academy’s obtaining for the
 “ use of the Students any part of this Orleans
 “ Collection; after a good deal of the usual cir-
 “ cuitous talk, he at last ventured to tell me, that
 “ it was likely, from the troubled state of Eu-
 “ rope, that the Royal Collection of Pictures in
 “ the Escorial might in their turn come soon to be
 “ dislodged, and that then it would be adviseable
 “ to endeavour at obtaining some of them. I
 “ was astonished, as may well be supposed, at
 “ such an answer, and therefore suffered the con-
 “ versation to terminate. But as I think, that,
 “ according to the old adage, we had better not
 “ wait for the sky’s falling when we want to catch
 “ larks; but that rather, in the name of God, we
 “ make immediate use of the means he has put
 “ into our power, by employing springes and
 “ nets: so by now making use of this sixteen
 “ thousand pounds, the Academy would shew an
 “ example

“ example worthy itself, and worthy the nation,
 “ whose offspring it is ; and I will pledge
 “ my soul for its fructifying, by exciting such a
 “ congenial generous patriotifm as would exceed
 “ our moft sanguine expectations. Men who have
 “ a goufto for the fine Arts can never be infenfible
 “ and ftrangers to fuch feelings. As for difpofing
 “ this money in the wretched penfion bufinefs, it
 “ can never be attended with any good ufe ; it
 “ will only create meannefs and fervility in the
 “ Academy, utterly incompatible with that true
 “ and legitimate fpirit, which only can advance,
 “ raife, and ennoble Art.

“ From what I had already attempted in my
 “ printed Letter to the Dilettanti Society, refpect-
 “ ing the obtention of thefe fo very neceffary and
 “ effential materials for the Study of the Pupils,
 “ whose Education has been undertaken by this
 “ Academy, I cannot help feeling myfelf *pledged*
 “ and *called upon* for my utmoft attention and foli-
 “ citude to this bufinefs in all the ftages of it ; and
 “ this, I hope, will be accepted as fufficient juftifi-
 “ cation and apology for any harfh, undefirable,
 “ unavoidable matter which might have occurred
 “ in the purfuit of my object. God knows, I
 “ have not fought after any thing invidious or un-
 “ pleafant, quite the contrary ; as much only, and
 “ juft fuch a ftatement of truth, as was neceffarily
 “ connected with propriety and utility, as well as
 “ -with

“ with justice, alone swayed me ; and let me be
 “ permitted to add, that I feel myself in the most
 “ unreserved charity, as well with those whom the
 “ necessity of the case obliges me to withstand, as
 “ those with whom I co-operate.”

The reading of the above passage in my sixth
 Lecture was on the sixth Monday from last Twelfth
 day ; and what occurred almost immediately after
 between the Academy and me, will be found de-
 tailed in the following pages of a Case which I had
 drawn up some time since, although I have been
 disappointed in my wish of publishing it earlier.

STATEMENT of the Case of Mr. BARRY, who after a tedious contest of many years with certain Members of the Royal Academy, respecting the obtaining of such Materials for Art, and such modes of procedure relative to Public Trusts, and such application of the Funds of the Academy, as would be most conducive to the Advancement of Art and of the National Glory, was, by a vote of the Royal Academy, removed from his situation in that body, April 15, 1799.

Just after the reading of my Lectures, and almost in the beginning of my month's superintendence as Visitor in the living Academy, the following Letter was sent me from the Secretary :

SIR,

A body of charges relative to the academical conduct of the Professor of Painting, having been received by the Council, together with personal information in support of the same, by some members of the Academy, the Council, on investigation of both, and mature consideration, deem those charges and information sufficiently important to be laid before the whole body of Academicians, to be examined ; and if they coincide in opinion, the heads of those charges then to be communicated to the Professor of Painting. In consequence

quence of which resolution, the Council think it incumbent on them to inform Mr. Barry of the same.

I am, SIR,

Your very humble servant,

J. RICHARDS, R.A. Sec.

Royal Academy, March 12, 1799.

James Barry, Esq.

And afterwards the following Letter:

Royal Academy, March 13, 1799.

SIR,

You are requested to meet the President and the rest of the Academicians, on Tuesday next, the 19th day of March, at seven o'clock in the evening, to admit Henry Tresham and Thomas Daniel Academicians, and give their diplomas; and afterwards to receive those minutes of the Council, respecting the charges brought before them, relative to the academical conduct of the Professor of Painting.

I am, SIR,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN RICHARDS, R.A. Sec.

James Barry, Esq.

At this meeting of the 19th, after the business of receiving the two new Academicians was over, Mr. West, the President, rose, and prefaced the
Secre-

Secretary's reading the minutes of the Council respecting the charges brought against the Professor of Painting, by acquainting the meeting that he desired to be heard immediately after the charges against the Professor were read; and accordingly, after they were read, he immediately got up, and moved, that a Committee of eleven be appointed to examine those charges. Mr. Barry observed, that this was a departure from what had been proposed in the above Letter from the Council, and he therefore desired to have a copy allowed him of those two papers of charges and information before, or whether they appointed any Committee or not, about which he did not mean to concern himself. But this allowance of any copy was repeatedly refused to him, and the Academy proceeded to appoint the Committee. Although this departure from the mode of procedure proposed in the above Letter from the Council, might appear trifling, and of little consequence, yet by this the cabal was enabled to decide upon the whole matter themselves, and to state and modify, in the manner most adapted to their own views, not only the charges made, and the matter on which those charges were grounded; but still further, by a chicanery the most illicit and outrageous, precluded the Professor from the allowed *liberty and privilege* of every British subject, of defending himself by his *right* to examine and to dis-

disprove, as far as he was able, whatever may have been alledged against him. Mr. Barry, on his return home that night, wrote the following memorandum of the business of that meeting :

Memorandum, March 19, 1799. The Letter of Charges (or, to use the writer's own phrase,) Denunciation, was written by Mr. Wilton. The personal information was given by Messrs. Dance, Smirke, and Daniel; and Mr. Farrington produced the charges from the Letter to the Dilettanti Society. Mr. Wilton's charges were specified to be the Professor's departure from the line of his duty, by making digressions, in which he abused some members of the Academy, both living and dead, and taught the students and encouraged them to a licentious disorderly behaviour (though without citing any instance as proof), very insubordinate and troublesome to him; and that the Professor further charged the Academy with voting away, in pensions to themselves, a fund of sixteen thousand pounds, which should have been laid out for the Students. Mr. Dance mentioned an abuse of the President (though without specifying what; the others were general confirmations, except Mr. Farrington, who descended to particulars, by producing the Letter to the Dilettanti Society, When I moved for a copy of the paper that had been read, containing the charges, Mr. Wyat objected,

jected, on the pretence that it could not be copied out, that I ought not to expect the Secretary to copy the whole letter to the Dilletanti Society. I told him he ought, on an occasion like the present, to be ashamed of such chicanery, that I only required a copy of that paper of charges which had been just now read to the General Meeting, and that as no more was mentioned in that paper, than the mere words, the letter to the Dilletanti Society, so, no more could be required in the copy, and that even to save the Secretary the trouble, I would instantly copy the whole paper out myself at another table, without interrupting them, whilst they might proceed to terminate the matter in whatever way they chused; that I neither asked nor wished any favour or indulgence from them. Mr. Banks some little time after observed, with other matter, ridiculously malignant, that as I had said I would ask no favour from the Meeting, so it was not necessary to give me any copy of that paper, and that the heads of it might be sufficient, if sent me at some future time. I told him the copy was not asked as a favour, but insisted upon as a *right*; that waving every thing else, I had claimed it as a British subject; and that if my opponents, my impudent accusers, would suffer me to be in possession of that paper, I would soon put an end to the business, by annexing to those charges, a compleat copy of those passages in the lectures upon
which

which the charges were grounded; and thereby save the Academy much trouble: but that to please him I would alter my manner, and now supplicate and entreat for the copy of this paper as a great favour done me, by furnishing the means of my extricating the character of the Academy from this business—to which I would not then give a name; that the Academy had formerly been in the habit of acting honourably, and that I hoped to see the day when it would do so again; and that I had a great personal respect for many of its members; however they might be influenced or intimidated by a combination.—Many of the members observed, that I ought to be allowed this copy; but Messrs. West, Wyatt, Burch, Farrington, and others, insisted upon passing Mr. West's motion first, which was for the appointment of a Committee of, I believe eleven Academicians to examine this business; and they accordingly proceeded to mark, and give in each, a list to that end; I was desired by the President and others, to make out a list, and give it in also, which I absolutely refused doing, telling them at the same time, that it was a matter of perfect indifference to me of whom the Committee was composed, and that the Academy and not the Committee, should be attended to by me.—After the Committee was appointed, I retired to the other table, where I wrote
down

down the following motion, which I then read to them, viz.

The motion which Mr. Barry made in the beginning of the evening, and which was seconded by Mr. Russell, he now makes again, viz.—That the papers which were read, containing the charges &c. against the Professor of Painting, be ordered to be copied out by the Secretary, or that Mr. Barry be permitted to copy them himself, for the use of the Professor, who may thereby be furnished with a just opportunity of refuting or admitting them. But this was again refused me, and Mr. Russell said, he would not now second any motion for my obtaining any more than the heads of the charges, which might be sent me at any time. (garbled I suppose, as the Committee should find convenient). I then, as it was past eleven, wished them a good night, telling them, that it was not a little astonishing, that the cabal, after so many weeks plotting, and preparation of those charges, should require any more consultation, and be still afraid of their being brought into day-light, by suffering them to come into my hands, and that there was something very sinister, clandestine, and ungentlemanly in agitating the matter for so long a time, without making me acquainted with a single iota of the particulars, until I had heard them

at the meeting on that night. I then left them sitting.

On the 8th of next month I received the following letter.

Royal Academy, April 8, 1799.

SIR,

You are requested to meet the President, and the rest of the Academicians on Monday next, the 15th day of April, at seven o'clock in the evening, to receive the report of the Committee on the charges brought against the Professor of Painting.

I am, SIR,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN RICHARDS, R.A. Sec.

At this Meeting of the 15th of April, (of which I made the following memorandum that night) after the report of the Committee was read by Mr. Dance, the Chairman of that Committee, I rose up, and demanded that I might be furnished with a copy of this report, which I would prove to be made up of misstatements and direct falsehoods, which might be easily dissipated. When I saw they would not comply with this, but that Mr. Tyler's motion, that the Meeting should proceed to vote upon the matter, and to take the whole of these charges for granted, (as well those forwarded by the

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the Council, as those added to them by the Committee, and without giving me any copy whereby I might be enabled to defend myself, by manifesting the falshood and impudent chicanery of those charges and statements) I then told them that they ought to carry in their recollection, that such a proceeding was altogether retrograde, and irreconcilable with the ideas and practice of all courts and orderly societies of British subjects; that it might perhaps be allowed by the dark inquisitorial proceedings of Spain or Portugal, but that it would not do here; adding further, that it now appeared evident, that the Cabal ultimately saw the weakness and insufficiency of their own proceedings, and had now changed their mode of conduct, and were absolutely afraid to furnish me, as they ought to have done (according to all legitimate usage), with copies of those indictments. That I dared them to venture those copies in my hands, and that it was astonishing to me, with what face these copies could be withheld, seeing that even according to the very letter sent to me, and signed by the Secretary, and which I then had in my pocket:

“ those charges and information were to be laid
 “ before the whole body of the Academicians to be
 “ examined, and if they coincide in opinion, the
 “ heads of the charges then to be communicated
 “ to the Professor of Painting. In consequence of
 “ which resolution, the Council think it incum-

“ bent on them to inform Mr. Barry of the same.” Mr. Wyat said he was not aware that any such letter had been written. Mr. Tyler acknowledged it had been written, but said it was premature. I told them I would then leave them, to prosecute whatever they intended, but that if they proceeded according to the illicit motion of Mr. Tyler, I should be ashamed to belong to them. Mr. Tyler said, accompanied with a very significant air*, that they would notwithstanding proceed, without doing what I required, and that the Academy were either plaintiff or defendant, I forget which, but he made a jumble, the purport of which was to signify, that it was not necessary to give me any opportunity of refuting and disproving what they had brought forward. Thus with the single exception of their refusing and withholding from me copies of these papers, the matter is exactly in the state I wished it: the Cabal have offered answers, (whenever they will suffer them to be seen and considered) to the charges brought against them in my letter to the Dilletanti Society, and the two men who came forward in the business were Mess.

* I could not help laughing, when Mr. Tyler, arching his brows, and tossing back his head with the stomach forward, said this, as it was the very action which had made such an impression on poor Sir Joshua Reynolds, and which he mimicked very happily, when he spoke of the Motion made by the same Mr. Tyler, which occasioned Sir Joshua's resignation.

Dance and Tyler, Auditors of Accounts, a new office which began with them in the year 1796, at the time of the passing of the Pension Law, of which they were the identical framers, and which I had criminated in my Letter to the Dilletanti Society. Thus the cabal and I have both acted like ourselves; my conduct in this business has been as consistent with the openness of what I flatter myself to be my own usual character, as that of the cabal is marked with the same concealment, electioneering tricks, and fraudulent deceit, which has characterized it all along from the time of their beginning with Sir Joshua to their termination with me.

So much was set down in the memorandum which I made on my return home from that meeting of the 15th, and as I took my leave and left the room before they proceeded to any voting, I was not surprized next morning to find that the Cabal had assumed all power to themselves, and were at once Appellants, Defendants, Jury, Judge, every thing which could favour their views, and determined the matter by voting my expulsion. I then called upon a great man, who has long honoured me with his friendship, and on relating the matter to him, he desired me to write to the Secretary, and endeavour to stop all further proceedings, until Copies of the Charges were sent me, and to which I might produce an answer at the second

Meeting; which, according to usage, must necessarily be called before even this Vote of Expulsion could be considered as an Act of the Academy, and in a state to be laid before his Majesty, for his acquiescence or discountenance. But on my assuring him that I was perfectly tired and disgusted with the business, felt a disinclination to meddle further in it; and that now it appeared to be a concern more of the King and the Public than it was of mine; and I concluded laughingly, by using the Law phrase, of letting it go by default. He insisted, however, that something should be written, and accordingly dictated to me the following very excellent Letter, which was sent to the Secretary of the Academy that morning.

SIR,

I am informed that, after my departure from the General Meeting of the Royal Academy yesterday evening, the Academy proceeded to a Vote, tending to my Expulsion from their Body, and that the professed ground of that measure was the admission imputed to me of the charges on which it was founded. As that resolution, according to the forms of the Academy, must undergo further discussion at another Meeting, the interest I take in the good opinion of my fellow Academicians, obliges me to lose no time in applying to you for information, whether such be the fact, and if it be,

be, I am to request that you will take the earliest opportunity to demand from the proper authority, in my name, an authentic Copy of the Articles exhibited against me; which were publicly and repeatedly refused to me at the two last General Meetings. It will afford me extreme satisfaction, if, by my timely possession of that Paper, as well as of all others in your custody, which may be necessary to the fair and full discussion of the case, I shall be enabled to offer such a defence as shall induce my colleagues immediately to recall their most severe and unmerited sentence. But if, unfortunately, I shall be disappointed in that expectation, you will be pleased to acquaint those Gentlemen with my most unwilling determination to lay myself at his Majesty's Royal Feet, with the humble but assured hope of obtaining Redress from his Majesty of an Oppression drawn upon me only by my Zeal for that Institution of which his Majesty is the Great Founder and constant indispensable Protector, and inflicted upon me with a contempt of the forms practised in every well-regulated Society towards the most atrocious offenders,

I am, SIR,

Your very humble Servant,

JAMES BARRY.

P. S. I expect you will favour me with a written Answer to this Letter, as soon as may be.

*To John Richards, Esq. Secretary to the Royal Academy,
dated from the Lyceum in the Strand, Tuesday,
April 16, 1799.*

To this Letter Mr. Barry received the following Answer.

SIR,

The great press of business on me at this moment in the Royal Academy, prevented me giving you an immediate Answer to your Letter; and I must now beg to inform you, that by the Trust reposed in me as Secretary of this Institution, I cannot communicate to you any Proceedings of the last General Meeting of the Academicians, unless I am authorized by that Body, which, if I should be, you will hear from me as soon as possible.

I am, SIR,

Your obedient, humble Servant,

JOHN RICHARDS, R. A. Sec.

Royal Academy, April 17, 1799.

James Barry, Esq.

Afterwards, without any thing intervening, Mr. BARRY received the following Letter.

SIR,

SIR,

The General Assembly of Academicians, having received the Report of the Committee appointed to investigate your Academical Conduct, decided, that you be removed from the Office of Professor of Painting; and, by a second Vote, that you be expelled the Royal Academy.

The Journals of Council, the Report of the Committee, and the Resolutions of the General Assembly having been laid before the King; his Majesty was graciously pleased to approve the whole of the Proceedings, and strike your Name from the Roll of Academicians.

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN RICHARDS, R. A. Sec.

James Barry,

Royal Academy, April 24th, 1799.

By all this it appears, that, in defiance and utter contempt of all the usual before-mentioned forms, and by an act of the basest treachery both to the King's Majesty and to the honour and interest of Mr. Barry, these Papers of Charges were, during this interim, laid before the King for his confirmation, as if they had been regularly passed, and admitted by Mr. Barry, and that he was unable to disprove them. This being a true statement of
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the case, Mr. Barry throws himself with a firm reliance on his Majesty's goodness, notwithstanding this unjustifiable, illicit procedure by which this goodness has been surprized, and also upon the candour and generous feelings of all orders, ranks and descriptions of his fellow subjects, hoping that they will take nothing for granted which is not fairly proved; and that they will suspend all judgment, until Mr. Barry can devise some means or other whereby he may obtain Copies of those Charges, which he would long since have fully refuted, had not the framers of them, conscious of their unfairness, insufficiency and nullity, been afraid to let them come into his hands. Mr. Barry recommends himself particularly to those Gentlemen who may be Editors, or otherways concerned in Newspapers, hoping that they may admit nothing premature, rash, malignant or invidious, which might bias or corrupt the public mind respecting this matter, until Mr. Barry, by being furnished with Copies of the Charges, is properly enabled to defend himself in a manner becoming a peaceable, orderly, and good subject, and who flatters himself with an idea, that he has some fair and honest claims upon the public attention, of a kind almost unique in the history of Art and Artists, and that when the truth is fathomed to the bottom, it will be found that he has already been almost a Martyr in the Cause of this Art, and of
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the interest in that Art, which it would be for the Glory of the Nation to espouse; and that the annoyance which has so long followed him * by the artful contrivances of an extensive and shamelessly industrious Combination and Cabal, has in a great measure arisen from the envy which attaches, and which always attached to certain situations so peculiar and individual: and from what he has done for the Publick in the *Adelphi*, he hopes that Publick will not think it either for their interest or their glory, that he should be borne down by unfairness and oppression, that he should be condemned without a lawful and fair hearing, and thereby prevented from happily terminating another work, of perhaps equal if not superior interest to the former one at the *Adelphi*, which the good Providence of God has enabled him to consecrate to the publick service and entertainment,

There is something strange and singular in this matter, which no one could have thought to be possible, if the fact were not certain and out of all dispute. In a contest where the security and affairs of state can have no manner of concern, utterly estranged from either Jacobinism, Illuminism, Revolutionism, or any other dangerous, treasonable business, subversive of publick tranquillity and good order, and which amounts to no more

* See the Letter to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, page 281, at the End of this Appendix.

than a contest and dispute between Artists, concerning the materials of Study in an Academy, concerning old Pictures and Plaister Casts of Statues and Basso Relievo's, and concerning the best manner of executing Publick Trusts, respecting New Pictures and New Statues, and whether it would be more for the honour and real interests of that Academy to employ its funds in Pensions on themselves and relatives, or in the further Completion of their Collection of Materials for Study, so essentially necessary both for the Pupils and the Publick, and perhaps for themselves also. In a dispute of this nature among Artists, where the Professor of Painting is for persuading the Academy to employ its Funds with these glorious publick Views, and where a Cabal in that Academy are for employing those Funds selfishly, and in a manner directly calculated to render their influence irresistible. The Professor, defeated in the Academy by the influence of the Cabal, appeals to the King and the Publick in a printed Letter, addressed to the Dilletanti Society: he is arraigned by the Cabal in the Academy for this publick Letter, and for certain passages in his Lectures, tending to the same end, and he is condemned without allowing him any Copy of this Accusation or Indictment, and consequently any possibility of examining and answering those Statements of Charge. Condemned for passages affirmed to be
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in that printed Letter, and also for certain passages in his publick Lectures, read in the Academy before a numerous and evidently satisfied audience. This was the whole amount of the Charges made by the Cabal, and read at the General Meetings of the Academy. But, as in both instances, the Cabal assumed it as proved, that the passages existed and were criminal, as they asserted them to be, and that they had fairly and truly quoted, stated, and fully answered them, which the Professor as peremptorily denied, and repeatedly demanded Copies of them, which he claimed as *his Right*, as that which could and would enable him to expose the falsehood or nullity of all they had brought forward, and without which, the business could not legally proceed further. In a contest of this nature between Artists, and to repeat it again about the mere materials and interests of their profession, it might reasonably be expected and looked for, that the usual and ordinary habits and course of national justice would not be interrupted and laid aside; and that if any of the higher orders of the State were to take cognizance of these matters, it could only induce them to espouse the cause of the Professor, whose views, like their own, had evidently no other object but the Advancement of National Glory, and the better enabling it successfully to struggle with and to combat all its rivals and competitors, wherever resident, and

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whatsoever advantages they may possess : but alas ! unfortunately for Mr. Barry, the King's goodness has been surpris'd by the most unfair imposition—the business is over—the Professor is expelled the Academy.

In a country so famous for its mild, equitable, and just laws, celebrated with such peculiarly triumphant distinction even by strangers, and by the Montesquieus, De Lolmes, and other excellent writers, advocates for the cause of humanity and good government, it will be exceedingly hard, if in such a country protection cannot be found, and if the benefit of those laws should be withheld from the Painter of such a work as that on Human Culture, in the Great Room of the Society of Arts at the Adelphi, which for public interest, and ethical utility of subject, for the castigated purity of Grecian design, for beauty, grace, vigorous effect, and execution, stands so successfully in the view and neighbourhood even of the so justly celebrated Orleans Collection, where the efforts of so many and such distinguished Heroes of the ancient Schools of Art are so happily united together, for the advancement of Information and National Taste. It will be exceedingly hard indeed, if Mr. Barry, after such a work, should want that protection which may enable him to obtain justice ; it will be hard, that he be lowered in the public estimation, from the mere barkings of an unprin-

principled combination, who pretended to ground charges against him, drawn from his public Letter to the Dilettanti Society, which is in the hands of so many people, who have found no foundation for censure, but the direct contrary ; and from his public Lectures, delivered before an audience so numerous, and so satisfied : and that this combination and cabal should expect to be credited on their bare word, for those charges which they have not dared to produce, although so repeatedly defied to it by Mr. Barry, who offered to shew their falsehood and nullity whenever he should be furnished with copies of them ; and that in reality and truth he considered (and in that he was not singular), that both his Lectures and his public Letter were composed of materials so honest, and so usefully coinciding with the public interest and glory, as could not fail, sooner or later, to give him another and new claim towards obtaining the protection, grace, and favour, both of the King and of the Nation, in his future scuffles with that cabal, if it should any longer be suffered to exist : for when these matters are fully known and considered, it must be apparent that his Majesty himself, as Patron and Protector of an Institution for raising and ennobling Art, is of all others in the kingdom the most really interested in supporting the Professor ; the cause and the views of both can be but one and the same.

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It is worth observing, that the cabal have accused and condemned the Professor for disseminating dissatisfaction and insubordination among the Students of the Academy, by having, both in his Letter to the Dilettanti, and in his Lectures, so frequently insisted on the insufficiency and incompleteness of the Academical Education, without such a Collection of Pictures of the old Masters as would enable the Pupils to paint; and that without this, the Academy was but a School of Drawing, and failed, and even cruelly dissipated the time, and misled the Pupils in one of the most important parts of what it had so ostentatiously undertaken to perform for them. If this be disseminating dissatisfaction and insubordination, the Professor has surely every reason to glory in being so accused. However, he must confess himself unable to conceive how a charge of so much effrontery and ignorance (to say nothing worse of it) can be any longer upheld; for otherways, this charge will also extend to those Noblemen and Gentlemen, who being of the same opinion with the Professor, are now about to supply and remedy the defects of this Academical Education, by making public galleries of those old pictures, where the Pupils might be assisted in the inspection and study of whatever is necessary for the Colouring and mechanical conduct, and happy termination of their work. It is indeed a providential circumstance,

stance, that these patriotic characters have thus embarked in the same hitherto forlorn cause with the Pupils and the Professor; as these illiberal, absurd accusations must now cease, and the Pupils and the Professor must be all exculpated from every sinister, tricking imputation of insubordination, &c. which cannot now be extended with the same impunity to those noble and patriotic characters out of the Academy, as unfortunately they have hitherto been to the poor Pupils, and to the Professor in it.

Mr. Barry has long since had occasion to regret, that in repelling the very impudent base attacks of this cabal, both in and out of the Academy, that he has (besides the great loss of time from the practice and theoretical investigation of his Art, which he so dearly loves,) been still further obliged (in the detection of so much chicanery and imposture), sometimes to make use of expressions, though not adequate to the base, insidious, wicked conduct of his opponents, yet much harsher than was agreeable to his education and feelings, and to the common charities which as a Christian he held himself obliged to extend to all, whether good or bad men. But what could he do otherways, thus pressingly urged, kept at bay for such a length of time, and with such an unexampled brutality? The common and generous feelings of the Public will surely not wish to restrain him from

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defending himself by the ordinary use of his native language, conscious as he is, that the occasions far outgo any thing that he has said, or that he could have said; and that Artists have enjoyed triumphs in other countries, for far less achievements than those for which he has unfortunately been obliged to defend himself in this. But as Almighty God permits it, acquiescence is duty; nay, it is all for the best; honest Columbus lived to see the time that his chains became an ornament which he was proud of wearing.

Surely no man of candour, even no mere looker-on, can think it a fair or allowable procedure, to conjure up all this annoyance to Mr. Barry, and just at this time, after he had for the greatest part of last summer been constantly on the wing, carrying melioration and improvement through his extensive scenes at the Adelphi, from the Thracian Orpheus, through the Heroes at Olympia, and the retributions of Elysium*; and after the honourable and exemplary Society who are the conservators and proprietors of this work, had, in a manner so very flattering and grateful to the feelings of Mr. Barry, crowned his labours with such an honourable and never to be forgotten testimony; not as a

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* As some new figures were at this time introduced into the Picture of Elysium, I shall, for the satisfaction of those who may find any entertainment in that work, insert a copy of the Letter which I wrote on that occasion, and which the reader will find at the conclusion of this Appendix.

compensation for what he had done, which they urbanely and with their usual delicacy, affirmed to be above their means, but as an avowal and testimony of their sense of his Public Zeal, and of the eminent Merits of his Work on the Cultivation of the Human Faculties in their great room. When also, another particular, not less interesting, is added to this, namely, the satisfaction Mr. Barry expected to enjoy on seeing the important matter which, as appears by his Letter to the Dilettanti Society, he had for so many years, and with so much labour and anxiety to himself, been endeavouring to effect, respecting that Collection of Pictures of the good Old Schools, which was so absolutely necessary to compleat the Education of the generous youths, Students of the Academy, and of the Public at large, who equally stood in need of similar information, as they were ultimately to appreciate the labours of those Students. The obtention of this most important object of Education, which Mr. Barry had so much and so long at heart, was now at last effected by the high-spirited, truly noble interference of his Grace the Duke of Bridgwater, and the Earls of Carlisle and Gower, who patriotically came forward with 43,500*l.* in order to prevent that part of the Orleans Collection of Pictures which yet remained, from being carried out of the country ; and thereby furnish the opportunity of affording that assistance and gratification

to our young Artists and to the Public, which they are now likely to enjoy in an ample, liberal, and truly patriotic manner. Was it then well and honestly done, in the midst of these well-earned prospects of satisfaction, for the cabal of the Royal Academy, which has long since been too powerful in that body, as poor Sir Joshua Reynolds experienced but too bitterly, and which cabal is now become uncontrollable and absolute, since the passing of the Pension Law; was it quite fair and honourable in them (from their too eager and vengeful desire of marring those prospects of Mr. Barry, and mixing dirt with his little, though well-earned triumphs,) to contrive matters after such a manner as to effect their purpose, even though it should fix an indelible stain upon the Academy, by making it appear to be the first example of an unwarrantable, illegal instrument for subverting the good old usages of the land, by condemning one of its members without allowing him a hearing, and the privilege of defending himself before the passing of judgment, and thereby wounding through his side the peace and security of all other societies in the kingdom, whose members would by this evil example be unfortunately exposed to the same peril. However, there is some good which a reflecting mind might draw from these evils, as they render credible, and so strengthen former examples, as to enable us to establish such

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corollaries or general conclusions as cannot fail to give the surest direction to our observations, rules, and judgment on the affairs of life.

These corollaries enable us to affirm with confidence, that great care ought to be taken that men in the lower departments of Art have, not too much countenance and patronage of a certain kind ; for we may be well assured, that in Academies where the little people govern, the great will soon be proscribed. Cain will endeavour to get rid of his brother Abel, even for the sole reason of his being better than himself. Who can say what baseness and conscious inferiority is not capable of attempting in certain situations which afford the means ? Homer, Milton, and such like, would stand a poor chance with the votes of twenty poetasters against them. What would have been the fate of Mr. Pope, if he had not lived at large in the world ; and if, for the public service, he had pent himself up in an Academy ; his existence in that Academy, or even in the country, would have been very precarious indeed, if it depended upon the votes of the Dennis's, Gildons, and the whole race of poisonous insects, which, as in a Museum, are pinned up for the inspection of after-ages, in the fine verses of the Dunciad. Surely, surely, nothing can be more injurious to the public glory, and more subversive of all good,

(as far as Arts are concerned) than mean Artists powerfully countenanced and patronized: for let them be ever so mean and scandalous, their first wish must and will be, to employ every artifice, influence, means, and interest, to lessen their betters, and make them to appear more mean and scandalous than themselves; and the consciousness of their own turpitude and unworthiness, must so induce them to labour proportionably at this reduction and lowering business, that in certain hands, as far as they can obtain credit, their opponents must unfortunately be reduced very low indeed.

Copy of a Letter to the Right Honourable the
PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENTS, and the rest
of the NOBLEMEN and GENTLEMEN of the
SOCIETY for the ENCOURAGEMENT of ARTS,
&c. John-Street, Adelphi.

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

I have to thank you, which I do very sincerely, for your kind indulgence, in permitting me, during your last recess, to retouch my Work on Human Culture, which is in your Great Room. My heart had been long set upon making a few amendments in certain parts of that work; those
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amendments are made, and in that respect I am now gratified to the utmost of my wishes. However, as our satisfaction is never to be complete, (at least here below) a blemish has, partly from the suggestion of others, lately occurred to me, which, from the numerous attentions necessarily required in so much matter of subject, had unhappily escaped my observation before, and which, as it is not too late to remedy, and as an essential part of what is necessarily to be done, must lie with your Society, I am ready most chearfully to do what depends on me, whenever it is your pleasure to desire it. The unlucky blemish is in the fifth Picture of the Series, where the Society are occupied in the distribution of Premiums, and where so much occurs of what is great and respectable as to rank and talents; there is nothing to specify the City of London, except the view of St. Paul's in the distance. Had I introduced the Lord-Mayor of that City, which has always been so remarkably distinguished for its numerous Hospitals, Schools, and for whatever could best denote the most truly citizen-like and generous publicity, I had then done it a justice which would be in strict unison with the other parts of the work, and have left my mind without a wish at present. This may still easily be done, if it is your pleasure, and without disturbing the arrangement of the seats, and the Sessions of the Society, as there will be

no inconvenience from the scaffold, which has space enough in that part of the room, where it might remain for a few days, for the purpose of transferring a Portrait or two into that Picture.

As without putting out any thing, there is in that Picture good space for the introduction of two portraits, I should feel happy in receiving the Society's command for filling that space with a portrait of a Lord Mayor of London, and also with a portrait of the truly noble personage, both as to rank and talents, who is at the head of their Presidency; and I am not a little gratified in this opportunity of saying so, as among the number of scoundrel public attacks that have been made upon my reputation and interest, one of the latest has been a lying story that his Grace the Duke of Norfolk had done me the honour to desire his portrait at my hand, and that with the most underbred brutality, I instantly shut the door on his Grace, bidding him to look out for somebody else. This is the third noble Duke, with whom I have, without knowing it, unhappily been embroiled, since the exposition of your work, by the political artifices of a scoundrel combination, who are daily growing more desperate (as appears by the late breaking open and robbing of my house). The broad general satire of denoting one species of ambition by the star and garter in Tartarus, was by artful whispers (and during the very critical time of exhibition, and the subscription for the

the Prints, and by people, some of whom, would appear to be and pass for my friends) fastened on his Grace the late Duke of Northumberland : and as if this was not sufficient to mar the subscription, during the course of the two exhibitions, (where they well knew I never came, whilst any one was in the room) another scoundrel lie was also at the same time, industriously circulated respecting my insolence to the Duke of Rutland, on his offering to subscribe. These desperate, malignant attacks, may by some be thought glorious, when considered as the seal set to merit ; but notwithstanding, 'tis hard, very hard indeed, that the reputation, and consequently the interest of a man who has no other dependence than what is derived from his labours——but complaining is useless—Combination, envy) malignity, and hireling assassins, may execute their work with impunity, in certain defenceless cases, where neither time nor money can be spared in the search of redress.—To me the law is useless, however excellent it may be*. If my work had
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* Upon a discovery of any of these unprincipled, hired scoundrels and assassins, whether their baneful operations be carried on under the appearance of buffoonery, or more directly with a crape and dark lanthorn, perhaps it would be more reconcilable with wisdom and rectitude, and better for the community, that they should not always be suffered thus to escape and go away unpunished, even though a man cannot afford the expence of either time or money to prosecute them at law, and that no protector
offers

had obtained for me some patron, or but half as many active friends, as it has active enemies, and that

offers with magnanimity, spirit, or patriotism enough to do this humane and worthy act for him. My friend Mr. —, who is a good sensible man of the world, has more than once intimated to me, that such infamous pests of society give the man they attack every right over them, and that their noses or ears are fairly at his disposal, whenever he chuses to put out his hand to shave or blow them off. That it is best to seize hold of them in the beginning, and make some notable example; for, as they are only to be restrained by the terror of punishment, they but grow more and more impudent, and progressively desperate, in proportion as they are pacifically defeated by mere detection only; and they will, thus encouraged, most assuredly go on from one rascality to another, until they finish by holding you out for some monster, like him who marked his nightly prowlings by flashing and cutting up all the women he met with at every corner, particularly those that were young and handsome; and I was, he added, really relieved from some pain on your account, when that monster was detected, and put in prison; for I expected nothing so much as, that some of the tools and emissaries of your old enemy, that miscreant, Richard Dalton, would have endeavoured to identify you with his monstership. The slightest hints, though only scattered in the air, on the lobby gather like a snow-ball as they roll along, and acquire great weight by the time they get down the back-stairs at St. James's. It may be that there is some reason in these notions of my friend and his associates, the men of the world, as they are called, by way of distinguishing them from our religionists and philosophes; and to confess the truth, I begin myself to waver on this matter, and do now feel, that a man may at some time or other be tempted to dash forward and exercise this *right* over some of those miscreants, and commit the consequences to the public generosity. Surely it is a disgrace to the country, to civilized society, to humanity itself, that matters should any longer be permitted to go on in so shameful a manner. The Public at large is
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that the emoluments bore any proportion to the envy, rankling and bitterness it has occasioned, it
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surely interested in protecting those who can serve them with expansion and credit, from being infamously overborne by a confederation of narrowness, imbecility, and let me add, impudence. Would it not be more becoming a generous people, to recur to such a usage as the ancient *ostracism*, where a man possessing too much, and too many talents, was permitted, though banished, to carry all his honours and reputation with him; rather than thus to permit the infamous endeavours of a *cabal* to tie up his hands, and annihilate him by a consecutive series and accumulated heap of rascally charges, under the hopes, that at one time or other, sooner or later, some of them might stick and do the business. And yet it is much to be doubted, whether the Public would find their account in allowing *ostracism* in matters of Art. It but rarely happens that a great degree of mechanical, laborious, various acquisitions in the practice of Arts, have been happily united with that depth and expansion of improved, highly cultivated intellect, which should always furnish the identical matter upon which laborious mechanical ability should be employed, whenever credit and celebrity is looked for. This being the case, it behoves us to consider, whether in all probability it would not be this very man only that would be marked for the *ostracism*, by the envy and bitterness of confederates, and combinations of the mere mechanical, limited Artists, who, although they might be excellent instruments under the direction of a man of intellect, can (in high matters) be but of little importance without it. This most important truth appears to have been justly felt by those Gentlemen of the House of Assembly in Jamaica (see page 16 of the quarto edition of my Letter to the Dilettanti Society); who, in the matter of Lord Rodney's statue, wished to have premia offered for the best designs for that work, the judgment on those designs being left to the Royal Academy; and that afterwards the most eminent Sculptor should be employed to carry such designs into execution. Monsieur Le Brun was,

would perhaps reflect more credit upon the time I lived in, and I would not have had my hands almost tied up ever since—but whether or not, let us continue to wrestle and struggle on cheerfully as we have honourably.

With respect to what has been recently done to the work, all is remaining of the matter that was there before; I have put out nothing, and have only invigorated and embellished where it appeared necessary. I have indeed, in the last picture, the State of Final Retribution, introduced something new, which gives a further extension and a more weighty impression to the old matter. Behind the Superior Intelligence, who is discoursing upon the Solar System to the admiring Newton, Galileo, Copernicus and Bacon, I have introduced two similar intelligences, which necessarily inti-

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as is well known, employed in regulating this important matter in Girardon's monument for Cardinal Richlieu, and also for many other distinguished Sculptors, who were employed in those monuments which give celebrity to the age of Lewis the XIVth. And had such been the practice in the reign of his most gracious Majesty George the IIIrd, perhaps the Public would find less matter of allegorical, tasteless rubbish to criticise, and more of interest, pertinence, and dignity, in some of the fine mechanical monuments of Sculpture, on which so much money has been expended. For these and many other weighty reasons, it must be evident that there is nothing which the Public ought so much and so cautiously to guard against, as the clamours and combinations of low Artists, who, whenever they are indulged, are and always have been so blinded by that self-love, envy, and desperate bitterness, as carry after them such a long *et cetera* of disgrace and mischief, as well public as private.

mates a Platonic mass of superior intellect in that part. Also, over the center group, the general arrangement is assisted by another angel strewing flowers; and by introducing three more angelic characters among the guards in the advanced part of the Elysium, I have answered the double purpose of adding, by those three large ideal figures, something more to the dignity of that part where so many portraits of mere individuals occurred, and without introducing any thing new into Tartarus, the action and way in which those guards are employed, necessarily leads the attention into that part, and consequently furnishes another link for uniting those two states of final retribution, which form the subject of the picture.

Happening within these three years to meet some of those truly noble works translated from the present race of the literary heroes of Germany, a most extraordinary admirable character of the true old Grecian leaven, has fortunately come to my knowledge, and after a long and fruitless search for a portrait of him, by the luckiest accident imaginable, only a fortnight since, just as I had terminated what I was about in the Great Room, a very fine medal was brought to me, by which I have been enabled to enrich my Elysium with another portrait, which would have ranged admirably near the eye in that groupe with Plato, behind Sir Thomas More, had it not been that the vacant space, was
there

there necessary for the composition as a totality of easy and agreeable comprehension to the sight: however Moses Mendelssohn, the illustrious character I allude to, was blessed with such various and graceful talents, that it was easy to find in such a society, a station and company which he would relish, and where he might give, as well as receive lustre; I have therefore placed him shaking hands with Addison, near Thompson, Dryden and Pope. 'Tis curious, though melancholy to reflect, that such a character as Moses Mendelssohn, with all his virtues, could not have become entitled to the citizenship of London, even though he were born here, (without which he probably would not do,) having previously attempted, aided or abetted the spilling of human blood, by firing at some enemy. However, I may safely rely on God and good men for my justification in spurning all such brutal conditions for his admission to that Elysium, where he makes so graceful an ornament. Constraint, encouragement, principle,—although these words may pass without any meaning with—but reasoning is out of its place, and thrown away upon certain matters,—Surely one cannot help cursing that baneful, destructive hypocrisy, which by artfully contrived oppressions, prevents any part of the human race from emerging into science and virtue, and then diabolically attempts to justify its conduct by the very barbarism those oppressions

preffions naturally occasion. Let God Almighty deal with them and us, with Jews and Christians, according to his own wise and beneficent, though inscrutable: *designs*: this can furnish no reason for our wicked and impious interference, in officiously tormenting each other, to the utter subversion of all those charities that ought to grace our common nature.—But to get to something less agitating: Amongst those personages who have been dignified with the title of Patrons of the Arts, and just behind Francis I. and Lord Arundel, I have introduced a bald-headed friar, holding a large scrole of parchment, which by the writing on it appears to be the plan of the illustrious Cassiodorus, for his convent at Viviers in Calabria. This graceful really patrician vestige of the antient nobility of Rome, had, under Theodoric, and the other Gothic Princes, employed the most unremitting industry and wisdom in directing that power with which he was entrusted by those ferocious strangers, in the manner best calculated to mollify, and give some alleviation to the deplorable miseries of his times: and when after many years of the best possible administration, and from the horrible disorder and confusions of changes, and new conflicting hordes of these barbarians, it was no longer in his power to be useful to the existing generation, he piously retired to this convent, which he had previously formed and furnished with whatever

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could be obtained of ancient wisdom and literature, to digest, to teach; or at worst to copy, multiply, disseminate and preserve it, for more happy-times, when it might again germinate. From these store-houses, as from another *Ark*, the world has again been replenished with Sciences and Arts: and as to our own Arts of Painting and Sculpture, we may truly and confidently say, that Europe would at this day be blind and dead to all feeling for the perfections of ancient, even of Grecian art, were it not for the long course of education in those Arts, which the piety of those convents afforded during the whole career, from Cimabue to Rafaele and the Carrache's. This reasoning will equally hold true of the Greeks themselves; that perfection they had superinduced upon mere human nature, arose from a higher principle than the listless, cold-blooded apathy of materialism, which can love nothing, because it leaves nothing worth loving, and, fairly left to itself, exerts but to destroy.

I have also had the satisfaction of introducing, near Rubens and Vandyk, the portrait of our own Sir Joshua Reynolds; and, agreeable to the sentiment expressed in his last discourse, I have made him pointing to M. Angelo, whom he so much admired. This great City of London would have enjoyed more advantage from Sir Joshua's fine talents, had there been remaining in it some of those

those exploded, old, and happily fashioned convents, where those fine talents might have taken wing. Alas! how much it is to be wished that our neighbours on the continent might think seriously and deeply about this matter, whilst it is yet time. Epicurism will be, as it always has been, barren with respect to excellence. These our neighbours have been long distinguished for their love of Art, and they will never be able to find any generous principle of sufficient general interest, to call out, to concentrate, and give efficacious existence to the abilities of their Artists, but by the preservation of religion, and wisely separating whatever it affords of admirable, amiable, and consoling, from those illiberal, mean, mischievous perversions, by which, from its occasional, accidental mixture with wretched political artifices, and mere low, mundane concerns, it has been often so much defiled. Let no man talk of the labour and continual exertion which such undertakings require; for it is one of the unavoidable conditions of human existence, that it can enjoy no blessing, and can have nothing good or perfect, either as to production or conservation, but in proportion to its own generous unwearied exertions. Alas! whither am I hurrying? No doubt, the prospect for Art is gloomy enough all over Europe; but let me not exceed all bounds of indulgence, by dwelling too long upon it; let us rather turn our attention to

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whatever there may be of a consoling nature : and I thank God for it, something which (as far as it goes) affords a most unalloyed satisfaction, has taken place since the writing of that Letter to the Dilettanti Society, which I had the honour of sending you before the close of your last session. The main object of that Letter is, I find, completely obtained, or, at least, in a happy train of being so : for I have been well-assured, that three of our high-spirited Noblemen have given 43,500*l.* for the Italian part of the Orleans Collection. This might have been well expected from his Grace the Duke of Bridgewater, and will associate well with the other numerous acts of genuine Citizenship, in which he has obliged the Public. Sir Joshua Reynolds's predilection and friendship for the Earl of Carlisle is well accounted for by the part his Lordship has had in this transaction ; and every thing fully considered, perhaps Lord Gower could not have begun his career of public life by any act more replete with general, substantial advantage. Your Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c. is, with its other commendable attentions, in the habit of giving a Medal for the rearing up a certain number of Oak and other Trees. But I believe that Medal is only voted to a single proprietor ; otherways, these exemplary Noblemen have really done something which, if rightly used, is likely to give growth to trees of another

another, a higher, and an intellectual species, in which the country has just reason to pride itself. I have heard, that this admirable Collection is shortly to be exhibited to public view, in order to defray the expence of the frames ; and as these Pictures were my old masters five and twenty years since, at which time I had been for many months copying and studying in the Palais Royal, I shall have no small pleasure in renovating my acquaintance, and trying and comparing them with my present opinions of Art, and those opinions with them, in some of my Lectures to the Students of the Royal Academy ; and I hope this may take place soon, even if it was only on their account. But not to wander from the concerns of your Great Room, or rather (as your views extend to every thing of high public concern), not to wander from my work in your Great Room, I shall close this Letter with observing, that perhaps those Pictures in your Room may in some few places seem to want a varnish, to unite and bring the parts more out ; but on second thoughts, it may perhaps appear otherways ; it may be that the public eye is a good deal corrupted by the glitter of coach-panels and Birmingham tea-boards : this glitter would be horridly meretricious and out of its place, in large works of a serious and generously unostentatious nature ; and besides, the Pictures are yet fresh, and if any little matter of vanishing

may be thought of use in certain parts, it will be better some time hence, and then it may be done from a ladder or steps, without any removal of or annoyance to the furniture of the room.

I have the honour to be,

With the most affectionate esteem and respect,

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient humble servant,

JAMES BARRY.

No. 36, Castle-Street, Oxford-Market,
October 1, 1798.

*To the Right Hon. the President, Vice-Presidents, and the rest of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c.—
John-Street, Adelphi.*

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